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ULTIMATUM OF PESSIMISM

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THE

ULTIMATUM OF PESSIMISM

AN ETHICAL STUDY

BY

JAMES WILLIAM BARLOW, M.A.

FELLOW AND TUTOR OF TRINITY COLLEGE, DUBLIN

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THE ULTIMATUM OF PESSIMISM.

1. THE question concerning the Worth of Life—Is Life Worthy, or Worthless, or worse than Worthless?—occupies in Ethics a position in some respects similar to that of the Personality of God in scientific Theology. This latter science is not, indeed, altogether abolished when, instead of the expression 'Divine Person,' we substitute such forms as 'Integral of Creation,' or 'Stream of Tendency;' but the structures raised upon such different bases bear small resemblance to each other, and Theology really becomes an equivocal term. Similarly in Ethics, we may lay down the proposition that Life is worse than worthless, and we can build on this postulate a science of morals. But there is obviously a strong presumption that the precepts of life and conduct deducible from such a view of man's position in the universe, must differ considerably from those which follow from the opposite and more cheerful philosophical creed which tells us that life is *βιωτόν*, not *ἀβίωτον*.

For example, it would certainly appear that, once we have admitted, as an axiom, the inevitable misery of life in every form, the propriety of the simultaneous

suicide, advised by Frederick von Hardenberg (Novalis), is an unavoidable and instantaneous consequence. Or, supposing we should not care to venture so far, the cessation to propagate the wretched species, would, at all events, become a moral obligation of such tremendous weight, that its violation might well be regarded as the unpardonable sin. But such consequences are wrathfully repudiated by those who take this gloomy view of life. I purpose to examine the grounds for this repudiation, as they have been assigned by the most recent German expositors of what is termed Scientific Pessimism—a system which is by no means to be confounded with what may be called Constitutional or Temperamental Pessimism (Stimmungspessimismus), and which is uniformly treated with well-merited contempt by the advocates of the scientific theory.

2. It would not have been easy to find a name more ill-adapted to describe the present theory than this same word, Pessimism. From the fact that a man is not a giant, it certainly does not follow that he is a dwarf. Most likely he is neither. No more does it follow that if a man is not an optimist, he must be a pessimist. Yet philosophers, considered with respect to their estimates of the value of life, are constantly ranked in one or other of these classes, as if no mean between the two extremes is even conceivable.

But the simple fact is, that both these expressions are now used to denote systems altogether different from those to which they were originally applied;

and thus, if we pay any attention to the plain grammatical meaning of the words, both have become misnomers. Optimism, in its original signification, meant the theory that this world is the best of all *possible* (not *imaginable*) worlds; and a philosopher who held by this view was an optimist in Leibnitz's sense of the term. Pessimism, on the other hand, originally represented the direct contradictory of this; maintaining that the world is the worst of all possible worlds; that is to say, the world is so bad that any increase in its badness would be incompatible with life. This was the form in which Schopenhauer first promulgated his theory; and, though he subsequently modified it to a small extent, it is still associated with his name.

It thus appears that, without ignoring the proper signification of the superlative degree, the words Optimism and Pessimism may be used to designate respectively the systems of Leibnitz and Schopenhauer, concerning the worth of life. But, in the present use of these words, this superlative signification is wholly lost. Instead of indicating belief in 'best possible world,' and 'worst possible world,' they now refer to 'preponderance of good over evil,' and 'preponderance of evil over good' respectively. An optimist is now one who holds that if we weigh the total amount of good over against the total amount of evil in the world, the balance is in favour of good: the pessimist holds the exact reverse. Here all traces of the superlative have vanished. Indeed, it may be observed that the Leibnitzian

optimist might, with perfect consistency, have held with his optimism the modern pessimistic theory; for it is quite conceivable that the best of all possible worlds may be a very bad one, and that even in it the balance may incline to the side of evil.

3. The modern pessimistic system may be readily illustrated as follows :—Conceive a finite straight line to represent the entire duration of the life of any given individual. Let this line be divided into small segments representing in order the successive minima of phenomenal (subjective) time, the aggregate of which is the completed life. At each of these segments let a perpendicular to the line of life be erected —and erected on the positive or negative side, according as pleasure or pain predominated at the instant represented by that particular segment. Further, let these perpendiculars vary in length according to the instantaneous intensities of these predominating pleasures or pains. Finally, let the total resultant of all of these lines of positive or negative eudemonistic intensity be taken as in the mechanical theory of parallel forces. Then the theory of modern pessimism may be thus expressed—this resultant is negative, and must for ever so remain.

For the illustration of modern optimism the above construction is not so easily available; for most optimists complicate the question by introducing the notion of the possibility of the suffering of X being balanced by the happiness of Y. This position involves a theory which lies quite outside of my present design. A grossly immoral theory it seems

to me; defensible on principles of Buddhistic Monism alone; and, in practice, leading, by a short and straight path, to results of unspeakable atrocity.

4. So we see that Optimist and Pessimist are no longer suitable names for the upholders of the systems which have been classed in recent times as Optimism and Pessimism; and the positive forms Bonist and Malist would certainly be more appropriate. Nevertheless, as the superlatives have become naturalised in philosophical language, I must be content to use them, having merely noted their changed application.

Among those who hold that the balance is on the side of happiness, *i.e.* is positive, we may distinguish two classes—there are some who hope a still further development of the positive Resultant; and there are others who fear its progressive diminution, and, still worse, its ultimate degeneracy, through zero, to the negative side. These might respectively be described by the uncouth but analogical compounds Bono-meliorists and Bono-pejorists. (To call a man an Optimo-meliorist would be plainly inadmissible.) Similarly with respect to the maintainers of the negative balance. Some may hope that the evil Resultant will diminish, and, perhaps, passing through zero, may even reach the positive side. Others may dread its still further growth in a downward direction from the neutral line of life. These would of course be Malo-meliorists and Malo-pejorists.

Thus, instead of two classes, misnamed respectively as Optimists and Pessimists, we have four

altogether. 1st: Those who hold that life is good, and hope it may become still better. 2nd: Those who hold that life is good, but fear its deterioration. 3rd: Those who hold that life is evil, but hope its improvement. 4th: Those who hold that life is evil, and likely to get worse.

5. With respect to all these theories of human life it is only fair to keep in mind that, so far as any of them are traceable to the particular disposition or constitutional temperament of the individual who entertains them, scientific pessimism ignores them altogether. Gloomy views of life which have their origin merely in indigestion, derangement of the liver, or general crankiness of disposition, have nothing to do with our problem, and may be wholly left out of consideration. So also may the more cheerful aspect of things which arises from a more favourable condition of the bodily organism, or from an inborn amiability of character. In one, 'the elements were kindlier mixed:' so much the better for him. Another was 'tetchy and wayward,' even in his infancy: so much the worse. But neither of these individuals will help us in framing our standard. Temperamental optimism and temperamental pessimism lie alike outside our field.[1]

6. Of this temperamental pessimism Hartmann,

[1] This was the only form recognised by Goethe, as appears from his aphorism—

'Der Gotteserde lichten Saal
Verdüstern sie zum Jammerthal;
Daran entdecken wir geschwind
Wie jämmerlich sie selber sind.'

in his Essay, 'Zur Geschichte und Begründung des Pessimismus,' notices three forms. The first of these, which may be called Wrathful-pessimism (Entrüstungspessimismus), displays itself in outbursts of indignation against the sorrows of life. As the newly-caught bird exhausts his strength in vainly dashing against the bars of the cage, so here does the victim, entangled in the meshes of personal existence, furiously struggle with his destiny. But his violence is useless; his complaints unavailing. Pain is his lot, and he may bear it as he pleases. No suspicion of the philosophical significance of his suffering has ever crossed his mind. What he feels and fights against is simply 'Situationsschmerz;' that is to say, pain arising from *definite* subjective and objective conditions.

Very different is the second form of pseudo-pessimism, that which has been termed Quietistic-pessimism (quietistische Pessimismus). This form is associated with the name of Schopenhauer; though the readers of his life may perhaps find some difficulty in associating it with his character. This is the pessimism of quiet resignation—in fact, of despair. It is probably a more dangerous type than the former, inasmuch as the energy and activity which render the life of the wrathful-pessimist endurable is wanting to the quietist. He folds his hands, and—'dizzy, lost, yet unbewailing'—endures the hard conditions of his fate.

The third, and last, of these unscientific species combines the characteristic evils of both wrathful

and quietistic pessimism. It has been aptly termed Miserabilism (Miserabilismus). The miserabilistic pessimist spends his life in sulky grumbling at his lot, without making the slightest effort to improve it. He is not active, nor has he the grace to be resigned; and thus, as the worst and most ignoble specimen of the philosophers who take the unhappy view of life, we may safely leave him out of consideration.

I have mentioned these three forms of temperamental pessimism in order to mark distinctly that I am careful not to mix any of them up with the scientific system. Writers who have undertaken to criticise the pessimistic philosophy have sometimes been charged with, either ignorantly or wilfully, confounding the true system with the above spurious forms; and, in some instances, certainly, the charge has been proved a true bill. I trust that the above enumeration will suffice to show that ignorance can be no excuse for me if I fall into such confusion.

7. Confining ourselves, as before, within the limits of the life of a single individual, it is plain that the solution of the problem at issue between the optimists and pessimists of the present day is to be found in the summation of two series—one of joy, the other of sorrow; and, in determining the nature of the balance when the latter aggregate has been subtracted from the former. But every summation is a summation of units; it is therefore before all things necessary to frame an eudemonistic (hedonistic) unit as the indispensable basis of our process. And here, at the very outset, an obstacle, which no

philosophy has yet been able to surmount, bars our path.

The eudemonistic unit, like the work-unit in Mechanics, necessarily involves two elements. In this latter science the foot-pound, or, in other words, the unit of resistance moved through the unit of space, enables us to express with the utmost accuracy the total amount of efficiency in an engine, and thus we have a scientific measure of the work done in any mechanical operation. But the eudemonistic unit, involving the two elements of *subjective time* and *intensity of feeling*, is unfortunately encompassed with peculiar difficulties to which none of the physical sciences present the slightest analogy.

8. All philosophers are agreed that, at least by intelligences on the level of the human species, the element of *intensity* in the eudemonistic unit is incapable of scientific fixation. But they do not seem to be aware that an accurate assignment of the *time* element is just as difficult. For instance, Maupertuis—to whom Kant apparently gives the credit of being the first who summed the total happiness of life, and arrived at a negative result—does not seem to have suspected any difficulty at all. In his 'Essai de Philosophie Morale,' after stating that 'en général l'estimation des momens heureux ou malheureux est le produit de l'intensité du plaisir ou de la peine, par la durée,' he proceeds: 'On peut aisément comparer les durées; nous avons des instrumens qui les mesurent indépendamment des illusions que nous pouvons nous faire. Il n'en est pas ainsi des inten-

sités; on ne peut pas dire si l'intensité d'un plaisir ou d'une peine est précisément double ou triple de l'intensité d'un autre plaisir ou d'une autre peine.'

But, a very moderate amount of reflection will make it abundantly manifest that this 'easiness of comparison of durations' is only a blunder. Happiness, being by its very nature altogether subjective, it follows at once that the *time* which enters into the composition of the eudemonistic unit must be *subjective time*, *i.e.* time as estimated by the varying consciousness of the individual concerned; and not by any means *objective time*—it matters not whether we use the word objective in the Kantian or the popular sense.

9. Now, that this subjective estimate of time is not only a varying quantity, but a quantity varying within very wide limits indeed, is a fact well known to every one. Neither sundial nor pendulum gives us any help in comparing different portions of it. It changes from day to day, from hour to hour, from minute to minute, even in the same individual. Contrast the estimates a man would make of the duration of two sundial hours—the first spent at an absorbingly interesting piece of work; the second, locked up in a dark cell, with a bad toothache. Had Maupertuis considered such a case, and at the same time had he been aware that this subjective time is what we are concerned with, he would not have said 'on peut aisément comparer les durées.' Even the story of the man who, in the interval between dipping his head into a tub of water, and raising it as quickly

as could be done, lived a long life, married, and saw his children's children grow to maturity—all done in that apparently indivisible instant—is conceivably true.

And yet it is difficult to realise the fact that the terms *great* and *small*, when applied to periods of time, are just as relative to our conceptions as they are when applied to distances and magnitudes in space. We can easily imagine a little spheroid, one inch in equatorial diameter, the exact model of the earth, reproducing to scale even the minutest details of its surface. And we can imagine its inhabitants looking up with awe at the terrific precipices of the Matterhorn—about the eight-thousandth part of an inch in height—and speculating on the tremendous, perhaps infinite, power of the First Cause—and why should they not, seeing that a mile and the eight-thousandth part of an inch bear the same ratio to the infinite? But we find it harder to conceive the lives of the microscopic population reduced in the same proportion, and yet continuing, as subjectively estimated by themselves, fully as long as our own. The duration of the oscillation which the eye translates into violet light, may, as apprehended by intelligences differently formed from ourselves, exceed a geological period as apprehended by our slower-working intellectual apparatus.

10. So the assignment of the chronological unit, far from being a simple and elementary process, is really attended with difficulties which are, most likely, insuperable. But when we come to the other

element of our problem, the unit of intensity, all are agreed that we have reached what is, for us, an impossibility. Some maintain that pleasure and pain, being heterogeneous, are not capable of being balanced as positive and negative quantities; and that, therefore, two units must be constructed, one for joy, the other for sorrow. This would, of course, even could the units be fixed, render the balancing of the two series nugatory. We might as well ask whether a mile or an hour is the longest. And, so far as scientific accuracy is concerned, this objection is valid. It would be impossible to say what amount of toothache, in intensity and duration, would suffice to balance the pleasure of eating a given number of tarts (to use Mr. Lecky's illustration), so that the resultant of the whole should be zero. The question could only be determined by a process of guess-work; and each individual would probably give a different estimate.

11. The comparison of those pleasures which differ not merely in degree but in order, is another terrible difficulty in the process of eudemonistic mensuration. It is commonly maintained that the pleasures of sense, of intellect, of virtue, form an ascending series of such nature that no amount of those which stand lower in the scale could act as a balance to even the smallest of the higher. This statement, like many universal practical propositions, contains a considerable mixture of mere bombast. It is quite possible that one order of pleasures, *e.g.* those of the intellect, may possess an average superiority over an

inferior order, *e.g.* those of sense, and yet a very weak intellectual pleasure might be quite insignificant in comparison of an intense pleasure of sense.

Still, there is enough of truth in the distinction to augment our difficulties very seriously in trying to strike a balance. For example :—A man sees a dear friend drowning. He can save him by throwing a rope. Suddenly a whole mountain of tarts rises before him. They are to be his, on condition of withholding the rope. Here a pleasure of affection comes into collision with a pleasure of sense ; and the higher order will not be balanced by any repetition of the lower. Magnify the mountain, and the capacity of tart-enjoyment as you please, the man must yet throw the rope—else, the vision of his dying friend destroys the mountain—'und ewig fliegt der Pfeil ihm in das Herz.'

It has been suggested that the relation of pleasures of a lower order to those of a higher may be illustrated by that of a differential to an integral ; but it is plain that in such a case as the above, no extension of the limits of integration would be of any avail to raise the lower pleasure to the level of the higher. I use the term pleasure to include the entire eudemonistic result of the action, negative as well as positive ; the latter taking the form of direct gratification, the former consisting in averting the terrible pains of remorse.

12. Thus the necessity of separate units, not only for pleasure and pain, but also for every separate order of each of them, appears to be made out ; and,

as a matter of course, a solution, even an approximate solution, of the general problem of eudemonism, must be regarded as chimerical. But it should not be forgotten that this result is valid only for human beings in their present stage of existence; and we must not venture to pronounce on the absolute impossibility of the problem. *We* cannot fix the eudemonistic unit; and if we had fixed it, we could not sum the series. But if there was in existence one who might be truly described as καρδιογνώστης, we could readily conceive the difficulty to vanish—possibly one of those who 'show a Newton as men show an ape,' might be equal to the task.

13. In establishing the scientific system of Pessimism two distinct lines of reasoning have been employed. One of these, founded on the psychological laws of pleasure and pain in relation to the Will, aims at showing the *necessity* of an excess of the latter. The other is more of an empirical character, tracing, as exhaustively as the field permits, the indications of the actual existence of such surplus; this second procedure may thus be regarded as an *a posteriori* verification of the psychological laws.

I have no intention of entering upon a lengthened examination of these arguments; this would lead at once to the μέγα κακόν of the big book—a great evil which the necessity of hunting through 1,697 pages of Hartmann's bulky volumes, to get at the new pessimism, brings vividly before the eyes. Though it would be doing that writer great injustice to deny the thorough readableness of his books—an excellence

really wonderful in a German author, and gratefully appreciated by any one who has faced the horrors of the Kantian literature. It is curious, indeed, that both Schopenhauer and Hartmann, the two great pessimistic abhorrers of the 'Corporation Philosophy' (Zunftphilosophie) should have been remarkable for this rare excellence of style.

14. I shall confine myself, therefore, to a few remarks on the empirical argument. It may be shortly stated in the form of a disjunctive syllogism.

If happiness be attainable at all, it must be attainable either in life on earth as it exists at present, or, in a transcendental life after death; or (disregarding existing individuals), in a more highly developed state of society on earth at some future time. But it is not attainable in any of these ways. Therefore it is not attainable at all.

The three alternatives which compose the major proposition are respectively described as the first, second, and third stages of the eudemonistic illusion.

15. With respect to the first of these, there seems to be a general consensus of thinking men that any one who seeks his own personal happiness in the present state of existence, will fail in his end. But neither optimist nor pessimist can here be exonerated from the charge of confining themselves to one-sided views of the phenomena of the universe. These phenomena are so vast, so numerous, and so varied, that if we approach them with the design of illustrating a preconceived theory, data will not be likely to fail us.

Life may be regarded as a rich and fertile plain, with, here and there, a barren tract (optimism); or as a weary, pathless desert, interspersed, at long intervals, with green oases (pessimism). But, whichever analogy may be the more conformable to the reality, we can find, without much seeking, abundant materials for either the gloomy or the cheerful picture. All we have to do is to close our eyes steadily to all inconvenient facts; and to open them widely to everything which seems to fall in with our plan.

16. The optimists are, in this respect, perhaps the gravest defaulters. Most writers on Natural Theology have been carried so far by their zeal to establish the Benevolence of the Creator, that their works are certainly not unfairly described by Mill as subornations of evidence in favour of the goodness of the First Cause.

In the first of his three essays on Religion, Mill writes as follows:—'If a tenth part of the pains which have been expended in finding benevolent adaptations in all nature, had been employed in collecting evidence to blacken the character of the Creator, what scope for comment would not have been found in the entire existence of the lower animals, divided, with scarcely an exception, into devourers and devoured, and a prey to a thousand ills from which they are denied the faculties necessary for protecting themselves! If we are not obliged to believe the animal creation to be the work of a demon it is because we need not suppose it to have been made by a Being of infinite power.'

17. In estimating the eudemonistic balance for the whole creation, the conditions of the lower animals must obviously form an important element—unless, indeed, we adopt the Cartesian theory of their automaton nature. But, in their case, our old difficulty about the eudemonistic unit is multiplied a thousand fold. Though Locke seems to have regarded the mental state of an oyster or a cockle as affording some analogy to that of an extremely imbecile old man, we are really in complete darkness as to the nature of brute consciousness. And thus, even without going to such low forms of animal life, but confining ourselves to those species which are least removed from humanity, we are hardly in a position to make a probable guess as to the true eudemonistic balance for their case.

We are apt, in fact, to read our own consciousness into the brute consciousness; and, attributing to the latter what we think would be our own, if we were placed under similar conditions of life, we ascribe a superiority in happiness to those species which we ourselves would select if doomed to transmigration of souls. For example—most of us would prefer the life of a bird to that of a mole; yet it by no means follows that the double integral which represents the eudemonistic result of life, is more favourable for the flyer than for the grubber. Shelley's ascription of superhuman joy to the skylark, in his evening song, most likely has no better foundation than the poet's imagination; and, for all we can tell, the arrival of a succulent blue-bottle fly into the web of a spider may

be attended with equal, perhaps greater, gratification to the ugly but ingenious mechanician.

18. The fact noticed by Mill in the passage quoted above, that the lower animals are divided, with scarcely an exception, into devourers and devoured, and which he considered to afford *primâ facie* evidence of their creation by a demon, is not so decisive as he thought for the negative balance. Schopenhauer would have agreed with Mill; for, in his 'Parerga,' he adduces this very fact as affording a full and perfect test of the preponderance of pain over pleasure in the world. 'If any one who maintains that in the world enjoyment exceeds, or at the least holds an equal balance with suffering, would have a short test of his assertion, let him just compare the sensation (Empfindung) of a beast devouring another with that of the victim.'

It seems to me that the comparison would lead to the reverse of Schopenhauer's conclusion. Of course there is the preliminary difficulty of our ignorance of the sensations of either devourer or devoured. But, reasoning from analogy, we might maintain a positive instead of a negative balance as the result of the whole transaction.

Though it must be admitted that the cat's mode of playing with a mouse is an ugly fact, yet, in most cases, beasts of prey destroy their victims instantaneously. The sudden death of a rat under the treatment of a competent terrier is a familiar instance of such merciful extinction of life. Thus when an antelope is seized by the tiger's swift leap, we have

on the negative side, merely the short, probably not very sharp, pang of the destruction of life. But how much have we to set against this in the positive scale! We have the protracted and delicious gorge of the tiger, and possibly of his family. This is most likely followed by what Butler would describe as 'a peculiar calm kind of satisfaction' during the peaceful digestion of the meal. Altogether, the instance seems to be far from decisive on the pessimistic side.

And, even if we extend our notions of a righteous retribution so as to include the irrational animals, as Mahomet appears to have done in the sixth chapter of the Koran, no objection, on moral grounds, can be raised to the antelope's death. An herbivorous animal destroys at each mouthful an amount of insect life which would make the ravages of the tiger mere trifles in comparison.

19. Schopenhauer's theory of the essential negativity of Pleasure, made short work with the first stage of the illusion. According to him, just as no eddy arises in a river which flows in a perfectly smooth channel, so in both human and bestial nature everything which moves in accordance with the Will is unmarked and unperceived, because no disturbance is excited. 'If we are to *note* anything, it must be something not exactly conformable to our Will, but some way in collision with it.' Everything which opposes or crosses the Will—everything, in short, which is disagreeable and painful—rises at once into clear and manifest perception. 'We do not perceive

the general healthy condition of the body, but the little spot where the shoe pinches concentrates our attention. And in the same way our general favourable conditions in life escape notice, while every little trivial circumstance of annoyance is observed.' Hence, he adds, results the Negativity of Happiness, in opposition to the Positivity of Pain.

20. This monstrous theory, however, has been completely abandoned by the modern pessimistic school. Indeed, for its refutation no more complicated experiment would be required than to apply a few grains of sugar to the tip of an infant's tongue. Its gestures will show at once that it has 'distinctly marked and perceived' a fact which certainly was not an unpleasing shock (Anstoss) to its will; as the application of a little rhubarb to the same organ would have been. Both pleasure and pain, when considered apart, are alike positive; just as distance, measured on the left hand, is as positive as distance measured on the right; though in geometrical work we commonly consider the former as negative, when compared with the latter.

21. Omitting, then, this theory of the essential negativity of all pleasure, the psychological arguments for pessimism may be shortly summed up as follows: 1. Most pleasures are only indirect, being cessations or alleviations of pain. 2. Un-pleasure *eo ipso* rises into consciousness; not so the appeasing of the craving of the will. 3. This appeasing is of short duration with respect to the endless craving which characterises the will. 4. The compensation

of any amount of un-pleasure by an equal objective amount of pleasure is an impossibility.

So long as we are dealing with the first stage of the eudemonistic illusion, some of these arguments afford substantial ground for impugning the optimist's view. And they certainly receive great confirmation from the fact that hardly a man could be found who would consent to live his past life over again.[1] The generality of this judgment is sufficient to eliminate the effects of temperamental pessimism; it may, therefore, be regarded as an empirical proof that evil in human life on earth is in excess of good. We are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses that it is scarcely necessary to produce instances of them here. I mention only one. For, though by no means an estimable man, he is commonly regarded as the head of British philosophers. Estimating the worth of Life, Franciscus Baconus sic cogitavit—

> What then remains, but that we still should cry
> For being born, or, being born, to die?

22. Thus, in his first assault on optimism, the pessimist is victorious. The old-world view of happiness is shown to be an illusion. The promise 'that thy days may be long in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee' loses its attractiveness. Judah and Israel may dwell safely, every man under his vine and under his fig-tree; but sorrow will find

[1] Few seem capable of understanding that a *repetition* of life means life *in every respect* the same as before; Mr. Sully speaks as if we must conceive it 'as robbed of its freshness and novelty.' This would be quite a different life.

its way even under the shade of the vine and the fig-tree. If happiness is to be found, we must seek it beyond the bounds of this earthly life. So we pass in our quest to the standpoint of the Christian, to the hopes of a better world—the second stage of the eudemonistic illusion.

23. Why Illusion? The answer is short. 'Because it is, *à priori*, impossible for the Unconscious (Unbewusste) to create a world in which un-pleasure is exceeded by pleasure.' This very sweeping proposition rests on the four corollaries from the nature of the will, mentioned above in section 21; to which may be added another difficulty in the way of the Creator: namely, the rapid exhaustion of nervous susceptibility to pleasure. But, it may be asked, even conceding all these five points, are they sufficient to establish the absolute impossibility of a happy world? Yes, answers A. Taubert, an energetic disciple and admirer of Hartmann. Here is substantially his argument:—We know by induction that without a brain, here, on earth, there is no consciousness. Hence, by analogy, we may conclude that every spirit, emanating into phenomenon from the Universal Spirit (Allgeist), must be provided with a similar apparatus. We may choose at pleasure any star as the dwelling of the spirits departed from the earth, but the spectroscope assures us that its materials are chemically identical with those of our own planet. Hence it follows that the psychological laws in the other life must be strictly analogous to those of our earthly experience—

Auch drüben wartet Kampf und Schmerz!
Bis an der Sonnen letzte ringe
Genährt vom Siege dieses Herz.

24. Nor is the attempt to abolish, as far as possible, *sensible* existence, by spiritualising, refining, and, as it were, vaporising the new bodily frame, of the least use in meeting this assault on the second position of the optimists. The fruitlessness of such spiritualising is shown by an argument exactly similar to that by which Aristotle, in the tenth book of his Ethics, establishes the contemplative life of the Gods. 'What,' we are asked, 'would be the use of Science in a state of clairvoyance?' Religion would, of course, be out of the question; for, as Taubert assures us, the close connection of the religious sentiment with sensuality and cruelty shows that the former, apart from sensible existence, could no longer continue. Even morality disappears, for 'where there is no body and no property it is impossible to injure another.'

'Every form of Love, from the highest to the lowest,' says Taubert, 'rests on the basis of sensibility' (auf dem Boden der Sinnlichkeit). 'Only reflect how much would remain to us of any beloved individual, after the abstraction of all sensible elements—after the abstraction of shape, voice, features, and all bodily actions manifested exclusively through the medium of the brain. Nought would remain of our friend but an unsubstantial shadow.'

What, then, is left but Life in Death? 'Every cogitable individual life, if *active*, is dependent on the

Will and its psychological laws, which give a negative balance.' If, on the other hand, it is *inactive*, it is life no more—it is 'Death associated with a living consciousness;' which Hartmann, rightly enough, describes as 'a completely hair-erecting (haarsträubende) reflection which out-trumps every form of pessimism.'

25. I do not mean to stop here to examine these arguments, which have been urged to establish the illusory character of a future personal life. But I ask attention to the fact that they are all based on the refusal to recognise the sphere of the transcendental world. The future life is not cogitable (denkbar), and is therefore impossible. It is plain that such reasoning in no way affects the position of those who hold that it has never entered into the heart of man to conceive the nature of this altogether hyperphysical existence. And we shall see before long that the pessimists themselves are obliged to have recourse to transcendental hypotheses of grotesque absurdity in order to avoid the obviously suicidal result of their views of the universe.

26. Before leaving the second stage of the eudemonistic illusion, I must not leave unnoticed their terrible argument *ad hominem* against the ultra-orthodox Christian. 'You appeal to your faith,' say they, 'in support of your future life. Well, we grant it; but you must take your faith as a whole. And we ask—Looking at the smoke of the torment, ascending up for ever and ever, of the unnumbered crowds who have walked on the broad road,

and entered the wide gate of hell, can you doubt for a moment where the eudemonistic balance lies? If all this pain were balanced in the golden scales of the Eternal against the blessedness of the "few who find" the narrow path to life, can you doubt the result?'

Surely there can be but one answer—

The latter quick up flew, and kicked the beam.

Unless we are prepared to reject the savage dogma as the apotheosis of injustice and cruelty, we had better be silent before this argument, and quietly admit the transcendental culmination of pessimism.

27. But, as only an argument *ad hominem*, we need not discuss it; we note it, and pass on. And thus we come to the third stage of the illusion: the final abandonment of all yearning after individual happiness, here or hereafter, and the concentration of all our energies for the promotion of the good of the human race.

And now for the first time, set free from the pseudo-morality of selfishness, we enter the region of a pure ethical philosophy. We must not forget that at each stage of the eudemonistic illusion, a fresh antagonist meets the pessimist. On the first, the battle is with the Jew, taking him as the representative of the Old Testament. On the second, with the Christian, representing the New Testament. On the third, with the disciples of Comte, the positive-humanitarians, or humanitarian-positivists; and these we have now reached.

I readily admit that it would be hard to conceive

a more exalted standard of duty than that of the man who, convinced of the hopelessness of striving after his own personal interests, overcomes the bitterness of looking into happiness through another man's eyes, and resolutely devotes himself, regardless of inherent sorrow, to working out the salvation of the other unfortunates, his fellow voyagers through the troubled sea of life. Yet, noble as is the aim, and amiable the character of those who, honestly and in earnest, fight on this stage, the position is perhaps the least tenable of the optimist defences. Here it is that the coming struggle between eudemonistic positivism and scientific pessimism must be fought out; and, I doubt not, the victory will be gained by the latter.

28. The great engine for the amelioration of the human species is, in the view of the humanitarians, the development of Culture, the extension of education, using the word education in its widest sense. They seek not merely to extend knowledge, but to purify the taste; to turn men from the grosser pleasures of sense to æsthetic gratifications of a higher order; above all, to erect a more exalted and purer standard of morality. And, by these means, they trust that the race, perhaps after many generations, may be raised to a higher stage of moral and intellectual life.

Good: 'sed quid occurrit non vident'—Culture, in the above sense, can be developed under one condition only. And that condition is—Discontent with our present condition. As long as men remain contented in a low and abject state of life, they will make no efforts to emerge from it. For an illustra-

tion, we need only look at Ireland in 1846, with her squalid millions of half-starved, potato-fed peasants —a social condition which will be restored, with reduplicated horrors, as soon as the large estates of the country are completely vested in a pauper population.

Discontent is, therefore, an essential condition of progress. But discontent means sorrow. Continued progress requires chronic discontent, and, therefore, chronic sorrow. In the discussion of this stage of the illusion we must, before all things, be on our guard against confounding the means or materials of happiness with happiness itself. A man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth, neither does his happiness. If we sedulously observe this caution, we shall, I think, become more and more convinced that the fundamental conception of the school of J. J. Rousseau is substantially correct.

I must here remind the reader that throughout the whole of this third stage of the battle it is assumed that the pessimists have been victorious on the second ; and that every form of a future life after death has been irresistibly shown to be a mere chimera. Bearing this in mind, we may safely state that the position of the human species in this world is that of a species whose capacities have outgrown their environment. The development of culture has for its aim simply to increase this disproportion ; and by inevitable consequence, an increase of misery will be the result. 'Imagination,' says Butler, 'is alto-

gether as much a source of discontent, as anything in our external condition.' [1]

Happiness, in fact, may be considered to vary with the ratio which the *satisfied* desires bear to the totality of desires; now the eudemonistic-culturist proposes to increase this fraction by adding to the denominator.

29. But, suppose we agree to waive this objection, and concede that happiness and culture, instead of being antagonistic, are directly proportional; even so the humanitarian position is untenable.

Whether we regard our life as a blessing or a curse, its end is inevitable all the same. And we may ask—How stand the uneducated boor, and the man of highly developed culture, in relation to this, rapidly approaching, extinction of being? To the one, Death comes as he comes to the ruminating ox; he has exhausted the universe, and has nothing more to live for. To the other, 'the blind Fury with the abhorred shears,' come what time she may, cuts off an *opening* life of joy—'καὶ ὅσῳ ἂν μᾶλλον τὴν ἀρετὴν ἔχῃ πᾶσαν καὶ εὐδαιμονέστερος ᾖ, μᾶλλον ἐπὶ τῷ θανάτῳ λυπηθήσεται· τῷ τοιούτῳ γὰρ μάλιστα ζῆν ἄξιον, καὶ οὗτος μεγίστων ἀγαθῶν ἀποστερεῖται εἰδώς· λυπηρὸν δὲ τοῦτο.'

30. According to Mr. Sully ('Pessimism,' p. 319), the shortness of even a happy life is rather advantageous than otherwise. He writes as follows:—

[1] Mill objects to confounding happiness and content. But he must admit that unhappiness always accompanies discontent. All that he ventures to assert in favour of culture is that 'a highly-endowed being can learn to bear the imperfections of the world, *if they are at all bearable*.' But what if they are not?

'Not only does the fact of life's limited duration not blind the wise man to its proper value, it may be said that it serves in a sense to enhance its value. Regarded as a whole, the value of existence is, of course, dependent on its duration, and the shorter it is, the less its aggregate value. But viewed in its successive parts it is otherwise. For one thing, the very thought of an end to life—while in itself saddening, provided life is happy—tends to intensify the present reality. We attend to things and become more fully conscious of them when they are set in sharp contrast with other things. Thus, for instance, a tourist realises and enjoys his Alpine surroundings the more intensely after framing a vivid image of the hot and dusty city which he has recently quitted. Similarly, a present source of gladness is made more real, a more potent influence on our consciousness, when set against the dark background of a future loss of the object. Not only so, all value is relative, and is increased or decreased according as the relations of the thing to other things are altered. Now, the greater a whole, the less the relative value of each of its parts. The longer our life, the less important becomes each successive enjoyment of good. This is shown plainly enough in our customary modes of judgment. We think less of a joy missed to-day by reflecting that other like joys will follow to-morrow, whereas we feel such a loss the more acutely when we reflect that it may not present itself again. So the Christian who measures earthly life by an infinite existence beyond the grave, learns to look on the

former as something insignificant. On the other hand, where the whole duration is limited, each successive part becomes more precious. This is well brought out in Pippa's jealous prospective survey of her one holiday in Mr. Browning's charming poem, "Pippa Passes":

> Oh Day, if I squander a wavelet of thee,
> A mite of my twelve-hours' treasure.'

31. I confess if I had seen poor Pippa about to enter upon her one holiday with this intention of penuriously hoarding up each wavelet of time, I should have thought her chance of enjoying it small indeed. Imagine her staring at the clock, counting the minutes that were left, and watching their swift departure.

The passage quoted above seems to me one of the most indefensible in Mr. Sully's book. If life is really happy the thought of the absolute extinction of existence—the dreary goal which lies before us—may perhaps 'intensify the present reality.' But it will, at the same time, have a direct tendency to neutralise and poison the present enjoyment. *That* thought must therefore, by all means, be stifled. In other words, what Hartmann calls Stumpfsinn and Leichtsinn—using these expressions to indicate extreme obtuseness and levity carried to a childish extent—are conditions *sine quâ non* of felicity, if life is a thing to be desired, and likewise short.

Hence, Culture, viewed as a means to happiness, defeats itself. And we may say to the humanitarian —You may develop every intellectual power and

every material advantage as you can; but at each step of your intellectual progress a grim and ghastly spectre stalks beside you, at whose hateful face all joys depart for evermore.

32. The position of Mr. Mill is so high in the philosophical world that I cannot avoid noticing the view he takes of the same question; though, indeed, his reasoning here appears to me so grotesque, that, only for this position, I should not have thought it worth taking into consideration. He maintains that, as a general rule, the happier a man's life is, the readier will he be to lay it down; and that it is those who never have had any happiness, who find it hard to die.

In his Essay on the Utility of Religion he writes as follows :—

'It remains to estimate the value of the prospect of a world to come, as a constituent of earthly happiness. I cannot but think that as the condition of mankind becomes improved, as they grow happier in their lives, and more capable of deriving happiness from unselfish sources, they will care less and less for this flattering expectation. It is not, naturally or generally, the happy who are the most anxious either for a prolongation of the present life, or for a life hereafter: it is those who never have been happy. They who have had their happiness can bear to part with existence: but it is hard to die without ever having lived. When mankind cease to need a future existence as a consolation for the sufferings of the present, it will have lost its chief value to them, for

themselves. I am now speaking of the unselfish. Those who are so wrapped up in self that they are unable to identify their feelings with anything which will survive them, or to feel their life prolonged in their younger contemporaries and in all who help to carry on the progressive movement of human affairs, require the notion of another selfish life beyond the grave, to enable them to keep up any interest in existence, since the present life, as its termination approaches, dwindles into something too insignificant to be worth caring about. But if the Religion of Humanity were as sedulously cultivated as the supernatural religions are (and there is no difficulty in conceiving that it might be much more so), all who had received the customary amount of normal cultivation would up to the hour of death live ideally in the life of those who are to follow them: and though doubtless they would often willingly survive as individuals for a much longer period than the present duration of life, it appears to me probable that after a length of time, different in different persons, they would have had enough of existence, and would gladly lie down and take their eternal rest.'

33. Remembering that the word 'selfish' is invariably used in a bad sense, may we not, in the first place, object to the desire of continued life being stigmatised by this offensive adjective? But the whole passage is eminently characteristic of Mr. Mill. No one who has read the awful history of his childhood, written by himself, can feel the least surprise that he grew up into what may be termed—not an inhuman,

but—a non-human man; a man destitute of some of the commonest and most powerful emotions and passions; and in a great measure an intellectual machine. There are passages in his 'Political Economy' which could scarcely have been written by anything else.

34. In every line of the above extract we can trace his deep weariness with existence. This is a common trait in the character of the Positivist, and seems to have reached a climax in Mill. This also supplies the most probable explanation of the indifference with which many of this class, though men of the highest culture, profess to regard the question of a future life. They will pry into the records of the past with a zeal and pertinacity almost incredible; piecing together fragments of old inscriptions, emending corrupt texts, digging up old battered relics of former times. All for what purpose? Simply to throw a ray of light on the condition of the human race a couple of thousand years ago. Surely, if we believe in the progress of humanity, the state of the civilised world a thousand years hence would be a more interesting object, if we could only see it—

> To sleep thro' terms of mighty wars,
> And wake on science grown to more,
> On secrets of the brain, the stars,
> As wild as aught of fairy lore;
> And all that else the years will show,
> The Poet-forms of stronger hours,
> The vast Republics that may grow,
> The Federations and the Powers.

For any one who has satisfied himself that a future

life is impossible, nothing could be more childish than to waste his time in such futile visions. But I should have thought that the man of culture would have sympathised with these aspirations of the Day-dreamer, instead of professing absolute indifference to the question of Death. Is it final—or is it to sleep, and perchance to dream?

35. Be this as it may, we may safely leave to the verdict of common sense the decision of the question suggested by the extract from Mill's essay—Whether, as a matter of fact, it is the happy or the miserable who would most gladly depart from life? Most men will admit, without hesitation, that although in times of pain and sorrow they might look forward, with no feeling of reluctance, to an eternal dreamless sleep; yet, whenever they are prosperous and happy, such a prospect is always regarded as, to say the least of it, comfortless. If, therefore, the development of culture be really a development of everything which tends to render this life comfortable and happy, it will most assuredly defeat its own end.

36. But the truth is—culture and happiness are antagonistic. For one desire satisfied, as culture is developed, a dozen new ones, before undreamed of, start into craving life. One of the most interesting chapters in Hartmann's 'Phänomenologie des sittlichen Bewusstseins' is that on the social-eudemonistic Moral Principle, in which he deals with this question, and to which I must refer the reader for its discussion. He does not dispute the augmentation of happiness by culture-development, but shows that

this augmentation is dearly purchased by an overwhelmingly greater amount of sorrow, necessarily called into being by the process.

If this be so, culture must depart from our present position, the social-eudemonistic stage of illusion. And, in its place, if we would be consistent, we must substitute the 'Wiederverthierung,' — the relapse-into-its-former-bestial-condition — of humanity. In fact, from our present point of view, the nearer we can approximate to the condition of a cow lying down in rich pasture, and calmly chewing the cud, so much the better for us all.

37. The democratic-socialists, in demanding, as an essential condition in a regenerated society, the equal distribution of property, are perfectly justifiable on the principle of social-eudemonism. The equality of all citizens before the law is but a scanty instalment of the requirements of the 'greatest possible happiness of the greatest possible number': equality of purses is no less indispensable.

The proof is short and easy. We may assume as evident that the happiness accruing to an individual from the acquisition of a given amount of property, is not by any means proportional to the amount acquired, but varies in accordance with the ratio which the amount acquired bears to the total possessions of the acquirer—*e.g.* we need only compare the feelings excited in a millionaire, and in a poor labouring-man, by the unexpected arrival of a five-pound note. Hence it is easy to show that, so far as property

is concerned, the maximum of happiness postulates as its condition equality of distribution.

Let a denote the average amount of property in any society, and let $+n$ denote an excess of property possessed by one of the individuals of that society, rendering necessary a corresponding deficiency, $-n$, to some other, perhaps several other individuals. Then, by the above principle, the happiness of the man who has more than his share may be represented by $\frac{kn}{a+n}$ (k denoting a constant coefficient), and the corresponding unhappiness will be $\frac{kn}{a-n}$. The difference of these fractions, $\frac{2kn^2}{a^2-n^2}$, will then represent the balance in favour of misery resulting from unequal distribution in one individual case. It is plain that $2k\Sigma\frac{n^2}{a^2-n^2}$, the sum of these balances, extended to the whole community, might reach a considerable amount. Indeed, even in an individual case, if $n=a$ the result becomes deplorable.

38. But the uniform law of the operation of Capital—to him that hath shall more be given—renders the equal distribution of wealth, except by forcible means, an impossibility. Capital, in private hands, must therefore be tabooed; the State must be the only Capitalist. In short, equality must be attained by levelling down, not levelling up. Any one who is acquainted with the manners and customs of the different trades-unions knows well how this principle operates in the case of exceptionally good workmen and artisans. Well, it is easy to foresee the social results of this levelling process. In Ireland, indeed, they will soon be obvious to every one's

observation. In that country the above-mentioned socialistic demands are now being energetically carried out by the forcible distribution among the peasantry of the property of the upper classes. The experiment is in this instance of peculiar interest—of course this must be understood in reference to the unconcerned philosophical spectator—inasmuch as the character and habits of the lower Irish are such as will render glaringly manifest, in the shortest possible time, the results predicted. We shall thus, with great rapidity, have the benefit of an experimental verification.

39. All sciences, with the exception of those practical branches which are instantly subservient to the production of the necessaries and coarser luxuries of life, will at once take their departure. And, unfortunately, practical utility is not often proportional to the purely scientific value of philosophical discoveries. For example—with respect to languages: what is most useful in practice is a colloquial knowledge of the leading European tongues; this, therefore, will survive for some time; but comparative grammar will be neglected. Chemistry and botany will be studied, but only to a very limited extent, and mainly with a view to the manufacture of cheap intoxicating liquors; but such investigations as those connected with molecular mechanics will never be heard of again. Hartmann cannot here avoid having a thrust at Metaphysics, of which he says 'it would be hard to name *any* practical advantage.'

And as in the sciences so in the æsthetic depart-

ment. High art is costly, and appreciated only by the few. It is, therefore, hopelessly doomed to extinction. Cheap, and probably nasty, photographs and staring calico prints will supply the place of a school of painting; while barrel-organs, nigger melodists, punches, and penny-gaffs will leave nothing to be desired in the fields of music and the drama. Thus, step by step, the lowering process will go on, till, in the 'Wiederverthierung' of humanity, the search for happiness, on this its third and last stage, will find its inevitable issue.

40. 'If we leave out of consideration,' says Hartmann, 'the consolations of religion, and the satisfaction of a good conscience, neither of which has anything to do with our external gifts of fortune, there remain, as principal conditions of happiness, Contentment (Zufriedenheit) and Comfortableness (Behaglichkeit). The former depends on the ratio of our *satisfied* needs, to the existing amount of these needs; and it is well known that this quotient cannot with any security be permanently increased and approximated to unity by augmenting the numerator, but only by diminishing the denominator.

'The latter is a function of good-temper (εὐχολία), obtuseness of perception (Stumpfsinn), and frivolity (Leichtsinn), *i.e.* of internal peculiarities of character, which render the influence of external circumstances almost inappreciable. He, therefore, will best consult the welfare of humanity who can render the race less subject to desire, more careless, more frivolous, and more obtuse—in other words,

can bestow on it once more the psychological marks of mere-animalism (Thierheit).

'But this is to be effected by the screwing-back (Zurückschrauben) of culture; whereas, by its augmentation, the exactly opposite effect is aimed at—wants and cares are increased, obtuseness of perception sharpened, while (through the excess of abstract processes of thought over intuitional) the happy childish-levity of disposition is broken down.'

41. So then, from stage to stage, the pessimists have beaten the optimists back to the edge of the precipice. Individual happiness in this life is not to be thought of, a transcendental life is a chimera, and the cultural development of the species, if eudemonistic, must be retrograde. And even this 'advance backwards,' it must be remembered, is only of avail as a palliative. The preponderance of misery may be diminished, but from the very nature of Will can never be reduced to zero.

Here then, at last, we stand face to face with the great crux in the pessimistic theory. Every one admits that there is a general desire of happiness, and an equally general abhorrence of misery. As Aristotle puts it, οὗ πάντ' ἐφίεται is no bad description of the Supreme Good; and, for Mr. Herbert Spencer, pleasure, in some form or other, is 'as much a necessary form of moral intuition as space is a necessary form of intellectual intuition.'

And, similarly, misery may be best described as 'what all abhor.' A life, therefore, in which a preponderance of misery is inevitable is naturally un-

desirable, a thing to be repudiated—if possible, destroyed—and, beyond all question, in no circumstances to be propagated. I doubt if it would be possible to conceive anything in more manifest antagonism with the dictates of the moral faculty than purposely to bring into hopelessly miserable existence sentient and intelligent beings, without their own consent.

Indeed we might venture a step farther, and ask the positive-humanitarian who believes that the imagined happy condition of the species is not to be reached till after several, perhaps many, generations, Can you, though ready to sacrifice your own welfare, by continuing in a sad existence, justify yourself in sacrificing the intermediate generations yet unborn by calling them into life? '

42. The answer is substantially as follows—and it includes the solution of the above problem in humanitarian ethics.

The development of culture is a law of higher order than the quest of happiness ; and it matters not whether the happiness referred to be that of the individual or the species. ' As long as the illusion that progress in culture is attended with increase of happiness remains in force, so long is it supposed that the striving after culture has its teleological root in eudemonistic considerations. But, as soon as the real inconsistency of the two ideas, culture and happiness, has been manifested—and the alternative of sacrificing culture for happiness, or happiness for culture, has come glaringly before us, then suddenly

the fact reveals itself (da enthüllt sich plötzlich) that culture-development is an entirely independent requisition of the moral consciousness; and that its imagined basis on the pursuit of happiness may be simply referred to an intellectual blunder.'

This startling conclusion will not be readily admitted by the majority. But, thank Heaven, 'such theoretical questions are not to be determined by the number, but by the weight, of the votes.' 'By all means let the man whose stomach is not well adapted for nectar and ambrosia keep eating his bacon and cabbage, but he has no business to stigmatise the former as bad victuals, just on account of his own inferior constitution.' Moreover, we are told that this vote of the minority is perfectly safe to prevail in the future, 'For, as long as it *is* a minority-vote, thanks to the stupidity of the humanitarians, the development of culture will be pressed on under the eudemonistic illusion; until at length, as the result of their own efforts, the illusion itself will disappear — the present minority will become the majority.'

43. It might perhaps be objected by the Bacon and Cabbage party that this postulated law of culture-development is, in the main, a peculiarity of Europeans and their descendants; and that the nearly stationary condition of civilisation, during hundreds or rather thousands of years, of the vast populations of the East, affords a sufficient refutation of the universality of this law. But, Hartmann considers that, within the two last decades, by the

establishment of Darwinism, the yawning chasm which had existed between the cosmical development theory (nebular hypothesis) of Laplace, and the philosophy of history as regarded by Hegel in the light of a continuous development, has been bridged over; and that thus the pretensions of development in general to rank as the absolute law of the universe have been immeasurably strengthened. Development, or evolution, by the help of Darwin's discoveries, has been established as an absolutely uninterrupted process. From the star-mist to the suns and planets of space—from the humblest forms of organised life to the primeval man, 'arboreal in his habits'—from this nondescript to the most highly cultured types of human life—we have one unbroken series. Not a link in the chain is missing.

44. Now, if we once admit this universal law of development, natural science assures us of this further fact, that, as soon as the organic form of the human type was reached, no further progress in the direction of the improvement of the external bodily frame was possible. Further progress, if it is to take place at all, must be in the direction of increase, refinement, and deepening (Vermehrung, Verfeinerung, und Vertiefung) of the molecular arrangements of the brain. In other words, the earthly development of humanity must take the form of a development of civilisation. 'You may dispute all development if you choose; but if any be admitted, for man, this must be its form.' The individual is nothing, and the nation is nothing. To use one of Hartmann's un-

savoury illustrations—'Just as in the natural world millions of germs form an indifferent material for selection in the struggle for life, so, in the sight of the historical Providence, millions of men are but a hot-bed full of culture-manure' (nur ein Mistbeet voll Culturdünger).

45. Well, suppose we are. The question recurs, Why am I, if dissatisfied with my position in the universe, as a component element of culture-manure, under any obligation to remain in it? I am surely in no way indebted to the Author of Nature. What have I to thank Him for?—'Famine, pestilence, and war, the regulating forces of population, rage relentlessly. As the foot of the ox on the flowers of the meadow, so does the cothurnus of history crush into ruin the noblest flowers of humanity. Reckless it strides over the despair of broken bands of love, the misery of ruined hopes, the anguish of the tortured conscience, the gnashing rage of enchained patriotism, and, to keep the thousand-fold maltreated and tortured mannikin (Menschlein) in fit condition to work out his ends, the historical Providence feeds him with —illusions.'

The very point. The mannikin at last discovers the illusion, and longs to depart. The pessimist has now got his back to the wall. The direct tendency of all his arguments, so far, has been to establish suicide as a moral obligation of high order. He has now to show that this tendency will not produce its effect. The problem before him is the Justification of Life.

46. That he falters as he approaches it is

apparent from his first answer, which virtually amounts to this—We are not concerned with the question whether this culture-development is the final aim (Endzweck) or an intermediate step to something unknown. There is no doubt whatever that it is the aim of the life-process of humanity; and thus our practical task is to co-operate in promoting it, by every means in our power.

47. We must, therefore, continue in life in order to promote culture, which, it is admitted, promotes misery. Again the question recurs—Why? As we are certainly under no moral obligation to the 'historical Providence,' we can only fall back on the assumption that we are impelled in this direction by a powerful instinct.

But, even assuming this appetite for culture—though most likely caviare to the general—to be a universal instinct, we must remember that the whole of this discussion, optimist *v.* pessimist—or, as it has become at the present stage, culturist *v.* eudemonist, is philosophical. We are not considering the πολλοί, who, under the influence of the two most powerful of all animal instincts, will assuredly preserve their lives as long as they can, and will continue to propagate the species, though all the optimists and pessimists in creation should shout themselves hoarse. But we are considering the case of the man of mental and moral culture, who will recognise, without hesitation, not only the expediency, but the moral obligation, of acting in direct opposition to appetites and desires, however intense, provided it can be shown to

be the dictate of reason that he should so act. That appetite must yield at the bidding of rational self-love —that rational self-love must yield before a command of conscience, are rudimentary propositions in morality. And thus, granting that this tendency to cultural development is an instinct, and an instinct deeply rooted, yet, if it should turn out to be unjustifiable by reason, it must by all means be abjured.

48. As before, we assume that any practical system of life which has a direct tendency to develop misery has a strong *primâ facie* case against it. Now, whatever difference of opinion there may be as to the proposition that culture-development in itself is productive of an overplus of sorrow, there can be little doubt that the indispensable means for its promotion are the most powerful of all agents in rendering life a curse to its possessors.

'It is characteristic,' says Hartmann, 'of the antagonism between culture-development and the weal-of-the-community, that the more disagreeable are the means, the more powerfully do they operate in promoting the former.' Of these terrible means two stand in the front rank—War and Competition.

49. There can be no difficulty in admitting that the uniform mode by which the development of culture proceeds is the selection of the most capable and most advanced races and individuals. We need not fear as the result a victory on the side of brute force. 'Had there been any chance of this, the primitive men would never have got the better of their powerful bestial antagonists.' A nation in a moribund state

of civilisation, as the Romans of the fourth and fifth centuries, may be subjected by less cultured tribes; but such a case is entirely exceptional.

Hence the necessity of war as an instrument of culture. Selection and survival of the most powerful tribes being essential conditions of progress, war, which affords the most decisive proof of superiority, cannot be dispensed with. Through all historic time this fearful murderer of all happiness has operated as the most energetic advancer of civilisation; and, until —possibly by the aid of the inhabitants of Jupiter, to whose political economy we are already so much indebted—a system of artificial breeding, on scientific principles, like the methods now employed in the case of cattle, be extended to the human race, it is likely so to continue.

50. Certainly the history of the last thirty-five years gives small encouragement to the hopes of the humanitarian that the period of this hateful process is nearly over. At no epoch, since the appearance of man on this earth, have such gigantic and costly preparations for war been organised as those which, at the present moment, turn civilised Europe into a conglomeration of standing camps, which the merest trifle might start into energetic and horrible action.

But, that war, thus powerful for culture, is antagonistic to happiness, need scarcely be stated. In all its forms, from the tribal massacres of savages to the mutual extermination of armies by weapons of precision, the whole process is cruel, barbarous, and revolting. 'The socialist, the humanitarian, the priest,

all unite in proclaiming war on war; and, unless we maintain the illusory premiss, that the greatest happiness, both of the State and the individual, is to be found in the development of culture, we must admit that, from the eudemonistic point of view, they have right on their side.'

51. The second essential requisite of culture-development is Competition, itself a kind of warfare, and another source of incalculable wretchedness. Perhaps we might say that, in consequence of its wider range, it is even more efficacious for wretchedness than war properly so called; and yet it is the indispensable stimulus to progress. Here again the socialists, in proscribing competition to the utmost of their power, are right, in the interests of eudemonism and 'Wiederverthierung.'

But, as soon as the checking of competition is recognised as an essential function of the eudemonist, he is led by a straight course to Malthusianism; and certainly the way in which the questions connected with 'the population theory' are handled by the modern scientific pessimists, forms a highly characteristic and extremely curious part of their system.

52. This peculiarity is to be found in the judgment they pronounce on such practices as those recommended in the 'Fruits of Philosophy,' a work which, some time ago, obtained an unenviable notoriety in England. The philosophic pessimists condemn everything of the kind as immoral in the very highest degree. But why? The answer is by no means what the reader would naturally expect.

It is this—'The diminishing of the misery of mankind, in the struggle for existence, effected by such a doctrine, is precisely that which sets the seal of immorality on its brow.'[1]

53. In fact, there is a special reason why these results, or 'fruits' of philosophy, should be regarded with peculiar terror by every pessimist, who, notwithstanding his pessimism, is still desirous, in the interest of culture, that the human race should continue in existence. Hartmann explicitly states that this 'philosophical system,' which he describes as 'a medical sprout of the Ricardo-Malthusian over-population theory,' is 'a more culture-murdering weapon than any which the arsenal of socialistic-democracy has yet produced.'

Indeed, he gives some reasons to show that, if taken in connection with any wide development of pessimistic views, it would, most likely, lead to what he calls a general 'Gebärstrike' of the female sex—in other words, that the combination of the 'Fruits of Philosophy' with Pessimism would exterminate the human race.

54. I must refer the reader to Hartmann's large work for his reasons in detail. They will be found in his chapter entitled 'Das evolutionistische Moralprincip.' It will suffice here to mention that he holds —with what correctness I do not venture to express even an opinion—that in most women the maternal

[1] Also gerade dasjenige, was durch diese Lehre im Interesse der Humanität erreicht werden sollte, die Milderung des Elendes der Menschheit im Kampf um's Dasein, gerade das ist es, was ihr den Stempel der Unsittlichkeit auf die Stirn drückt.

instinct does not start into life until the actual arrival of the new citizen of the world (Weltbürger) who needs her care; that the great interest which most young women exhibit for children and infants is often feigned; and that, as a general rule, it is only in advancing years their want is felt by childless women.

Hence we may assume that, under the influence of the 'philosophical system,' purely rational principles alone being operative, pessimistic views, involving the conviction that the life to be conferred on the child is, so far as the child itself is concerned, not a thing to be desired, but, on the other hand, a thing by all means to be avoided; that, if born, it is born to hopeless sorrow, the very notion of a happy life being an exploded chimera, may jeopardise the very existence of mankind. It can hardly be supposed that *mere abstract zeal for culture-development* will impel any considerable section of the female sex to undergo the sufferings of maternity, and the trouble of rearing new victims for the Moloch of culture. And why should they? There is a saying in Germany that 'wenn das Kinderkriegen umschichtig zwischen Mann und Frau wechselte, keine Ehe mehr als drei Kinder haben würde, wovon die Frau das erste und dritte'; and, possibly, if the experiment could be tried, it might turn out that the saying is true. But, whether true or not, it may be admitted, without much chance of mistake, that whenever the continuance of the human race comes to depend on a tendency to the development of

culture in the abstract, the lonely man around whom were the skeletons of nations may no longer be a mere dream of the poet.

55. So we see that these Fruits of Philosophy are, by the culture-pessimist, regarded as immoral and dangerous for two quite different reasons. First, because such doctrines, in the hands of pessimists who are not sufficiently imbued with the love of culture, might lead to the extinction of the human species, by failure of reproduction. And, secondly, because the amelioration of the condition of humanity, as a consequence of the check to competition which would result from the processes recommended, would materially weaken the most efficacious instrument of progress. Everything must be sacrificed to what Hartmann most rightly terms 'the insatiable Moloch of the evolutional principle.' 'Excess of the number of individuals over the sum of the means of subsistence available at the time is the inevitable preliminary condition of the struggle for existence; the battle-field of progress.' Competition must be kept up at all cost. We see it, day by day, extending its field, and redoubling its intensity. It has invaded even the nurseries of young children; and the culturists rejoice at the sight of crowds of little wretches, of eight years old and under, cramming for competitive examinations.

'Increase as much as you can the wants and sufferings of mankind' (dem Menschen recht viel Noth zu bereiten) is an explicit aphorism of the evolutional moral principle;—the only limit to the

diabolical precept being the caution that must be observed lest the sufferer's capability for work should be impaired.

56. 'The ancient systems of morality aimed at the reduction of our wants; but the new (*i.e.* evolutional) system demands as a condition their augmentation both in number and intensity.' Thus, beneficence and charity stand in quite different relations to ancient and modern morality. Hartmann, in the following passage, does not seem able to draw a line between judicious and promiscuous almsgiving; but the distinction is needless for the evolutional moralist. 'Beneficence and compassion are lauded as cardinal virtues in all religious systems; but especially so in Buddhism and the earlier forms of Christianity. But the realistic bias of the last century has, even in Christianity, led to deviations from this view. Such has been eminently the case among German Protestants. With these, smartness in business, activity in production, order in life, and industry in work have got the start of beneficence. Among Catholic populations, on the other hand, we find that, in proportion to the influence of the medieval ecclesiastical views of the world, and of the modern culture-ideas, beneficence and individual activity still contend for precedence.'

Thus to the evolutional-moralist, in his mania for culture-development, every form of social-eudemonism is loathsome. Sanitary reform and the science of hygiene acquire a certain amount of

significance in a moral point of view, but only because, by diminishing mortality—especially infant mortality—they have a tendency to increase the sharpness and severity of the battle of life.

57. So the Greatest Happiness principle and the Moloch of Progress have been sufficiently manifested as irreconcilable antagonists; and we are now in a position to thoroughly appreciate the value of the first attempt of scientific pessimism at a Justification of Life. Zeal for misery, though that misery be culture, will never suffice as a prophylactic against suicide, or, possibly, conversion to the views of the Russian Skoptsi. The 'tormented and maltreated mannikin,' longing to depart out of this scene of misery into his eternal dreamless sleep, is ruthlessly commanded to abide and endure his pain—because—

'The Culture-work of man (and ultimately that of other self-conscious organisms in other worlds) is the special Temple of the Idea in which the World-spirit, in ever-increasing measure, becomes conscious of himself (sich seiner bewusst wird). The natural evolution of the Cosmos and organic life, as far as Man, is but the vestibule of this Temple. All striving and fighting for cultural-evolution is thus a battle for the realisation of the Idea, *i.e.* morality.'

58. There is the first method of Justifying Life. We ask for bread—perhaps Hartmann would say bacon and cabbage—and the above is the stone we receive in reply. As a moral justification for bringing into a world of hopeless misery a multitude of sensible and intellectual beings, without their own

consent, something more than this is necessary. And something more we get. We come to the second stage in the Justification of Life.

59. Hartmann seems to be thoroughly aware of the weakness and insufficiency of his argument. He admits, without the slightest reserve, that the results which he has deduced from the principle of culture-development will find acceptance with only a small minority; though he maintains that this minority is secure of ultimate success.

'The demonstrated antagonism between the results of the eudemonistic and evolutional moral principles will at once summon to arms all the partisans of eudemonism, of moral feeling, of a philanthropical humanitarianism which is limited to the narrow field of view of the current liberalism, inasmuch as it must shake their faith in an absolute, universal Harmony. The prominence given to this antagonism must also be displeasing to the rationalistic adherents of a theological and evolutional moral principle, because these latter are in the habit of making out their point by cavalierly ignoring eudemonism altogether.'

'So I am aware,' he adds, 'that my treatment of the question will earn me small thanks from any party. But, in the conviction that it is not by stifling or palliating the real antagonism which empirically forces itself into notice, but only by tracing it to its root, we can ever arrive at an exhaustive treatment of the problem, and a resolution of the antagonism in the main, I have not shrunk

from rigorously pursuing an investigation which meets with small sympathy from any party.'

60. It is obvious that the conflicting parties regard the phenomena of life from two different points of view. The one take as their standpoint the Desire of Happiness, the other take the Desire of Progress. The question then arises—might it not be possible to reach a higher World-view (Weltanschauung), which would recognise the apparently contradictory claims of each. 'For it is plain that we can never rest content with the simple antagonism of the eudemonistic and evolutional moral principles. Had the greatest happiness principle been essentially and totally false, it would have been utterly impossible to deduce from it all the leading propositions of law and morality.'

Thus the problem comes to this: is there to be found in the moral consciousness a principle more comprehensive than either eudemonism or evolutionism—a principle which will contain them both as integrant parts? 'Yes,' says Hartmann, 'there is. It is the principle of the Moral World-order' (Princip der sittlichen Weltordnung).

61. To understand this principle aright, we must, in the first place, be careful to bear in mind an essential distinction between the ethics of the new school and the Kantian system. Kant, in his dread of a relapse into the pseudo-morality of self-interest, goes so far as to annihilate the teleological moral principle by stripping the Will of every impulse of a material character. 'A good Will,' says Kant, 'is good, not

by virtue of what it actually accomplishes—not by virtue of its happy adaptation to bring about some proposed end—but wholly by virtue of the Volition itself—considered in itself, and for itself alone' (an sich, und für sich selbst betrachtet).

Now it is plain that if we neglect altogether the Content (Inhalt) of a Will, and confine ourselves strictly to the formal act, we can only difference one volition from another by reference to degrees of Intensity. We may call one volition strong, another weak. And, if we choose to apply the terms 'good' and 'bad' to 'strong' and 'weak' volitions respectively, we can attach some meaning to Kant's description of a good will. But as this application of the words is simply an abuse of language, it is evident that the will must tend to something external to itself; and thus a teleological moral principle is an inevitable condition. *What* this external thing is—whether an end-in-itself, or a means only to another and higher end—is a totally different question.

62. In the second place, for the right understanding of the principle of the Moral World-order, it is essential to see clearly that the notion or concept of Individuality is an entirely relative notion. Moreover, the several stages of this individuality (or personality) form an ascending series. Between the lowest—the atom, and the highest—the universe, an infinite number intervene. For example, the individual man, the family, the city, the state. The position of a corporation as a legal person gives an excellent illustration of this notion. Its individuality

is something totally distinct from the sum of the individualities of the members. No act would be an act of the corporation unless agreed to at a formal meeting, though every separate member had previously given his assent.

63. In all of these series, just as in a predicamental line, each stage lies between stages of higher and lower order respectively. (Of course we leave out of consideration the Atom and the Universe.) If, now, we lay down as an universal moral principle that the end (Zweck) of any particular stage of individuality must give place to that of one of higher order, we have, at once, the Principle of the Moral World-order.

'Individual ends, in and for themselves, are morally indifferent. They acquire a moral significance only when they are recognised as indispensable means to ends of higher order. For example, self-preservation may be morally indifferent, morally right, or morally wrong—Indifferent, if our motive is a mere animal instinct; right, if our motive is to support our family; wrong, if the sacrifice of life was demanded for our country's weal.'

64. Let $n-1$, n, and $n+1$ denote three successive stages of a series, n being of higher order than $n-1$, and $n+1$ of higher order than n, then an act done by an individual of the order $n-1$ in furtherance of the end of an individual of the order n is a moral act; and yet the very same act, if done by the individual of the order n, would be only egoistic, *i.e.* morally indifferent; and it would even become immoral, if it

turned out to be inconsistent with the end of an individual on the stage $n+1$. 'In other words, the concept of morality is just as relative as that of individuality.'

65. Hence it follows that it might be a man's duty to sacrifice, not merely his physical life as an individual, but even his individual moral life, at his country's call. Hartmann illustrates this by the case of an officer on parole. 'The officer who, when prisoner of war, breaks his word of honour given to the enemy—perhaps by affording his friends intelligence of some important manœuvre in respect of an impending battle—must clearly see that, by this solution of the conflict between patriotism and veracity, he annihilates his own personal moral life. But he would be simply a vulgar Egoist, under the mask of morality, did he hesitate for a moment to sacrifice this personal moral life for his fatherland—just as the engineer sacrifices his physical life when he fires the mine and blows himself with the enemy into the air. Nevertheless he must not ask to be received again into the ranks of his comrades, for this would imperil the sacred obligation of the word of honour.'

66. The radical error of the adherents of the one-sided social-eudemonistic principle may now be shortly stated. It consists in ignoring the *new* individual end which arises on each successive stage of individuation, and in vainly imagining that this new end may be identified with the sum of the individual ends of the constituent units. But this is a fatal blunder. The weal of the state may be, and frequently is,

antagonistic to the weal of the greater part of the individuals which compose it. This fact seems to be well recognised in the marked tendency of socialism to reduce all state interference to a minimum; in other words, to abolish as far as possible political life, except in the form of a social organisation of labour.

The end of the Family is by no means the sum of the weal of the members of the Family, but points beyond this sum to the furtherance of the weal of the Commune. The end of the Commune points onward to the weal of the Province—the Province to the State—the State to Humanity at large. And finally the end of Humanity itself is something quite different from the weal of the Races, Peoples, Tribes, and Units, which are its constituent parts. But what that something is no man can understand. We have here a problem for the remote future.

67. But when we have safely reached this clear conception, that, at each new stage of individuation, a new and self-dependent end springs into being—an end which is not in the least to be identified with the sum of the welfares of the individuals of the next lower order—we have found the correct point of view from which we can rightly estimate, and judge between, the conflicting claims of eudemonism and evolutionism. We have found the Principle of the Moral World-order—'the only entirely true objective Moral Principle, whereof the social-eudemonistic and evolutional Moral Principles are but one-sided projections.'

'The relations of these latter principles to each

other in the Battle of Life may be illustrated by the position of the medical staff of an army in respect of the combatants. The former do their best to heal the wounds inflicted by the latter; and, when the surgeons and hospital assistants can do no more, even then the sisters of mercy can sooth the last moments of the sufferers by their sympathetic care and spiritual consolations.'

68. Just so in the greater battle. The inevitable pains which attend the evolutional process are alleviated by a certain amount of happiness; just sufficient to render life endurable—'the teleologically indispensable minimum of happiness.' Nature does not wantonly impose suffering on her creatures. All special pains have their origin either in the universal constitution of Will or in the battle for existence, which is a teleological necessity. For individuals in the lower stages of consciousness, she possesses no means for alleviating the painful results of the universal and necessary laws of nature; but then, on the other hand, the susceptibility to pain is not, in their case, so great as to require such precautions. But for individuals on a higher stage, where such palliatives of suffering are much to be wished, they *are*, in fact, provided by the exaltation of the barely natural to the moral consciousness.

'Thus the moral consciousness, in setting forth the greatest possible happiness of the greatest possible number as an aim, is, in no way, guilty of an act of subjective arbitrary choice (Willkür), but fulfils one part of its teleological destination. It becomes un-

faithful to its task, only when it oversteps the limit of such eudemonistic endeavour, by ignoring the acts and sacrifices which are necessary for the ultimate end (or for culture-development, its means) which are the ethical conditions of the admissibility of the furtherance of happiness.'

69. Supposing, now, that we agree to pass over all the obvious objections which might be urged against this Principle of the Moral World-order, and that we admit its establishment, the question arises —What help does it give us against the natural consequences of pessimism? In what way is it available as a Justification of Life? Here, again, Hartmann fully admits that the principle has proved ineffective. For a man has only to ask the question —What are the objective ends of the universe to me, that I, miserable myself, and unable to avert misery from others, should continue any longer in life? and, so far as the pessimistic arguments have as yet led us, no answer can be given him. Once more he stands face to face with suicide; or, if he does not carry out his principles to their extreme consequences, he is likely to fall into the most horrible condition that can be conceived—absolute indifference to every aim of life.

One hope only is left—we must abandon the objective phenomenal world; transcend the sphere of individuality; recognise the illusion of the absoluteness of the Ego; and seek the foundations of morality in a deeper sphere.

70. 'It must be confessed that though our in-

vestigations, so far as they have proceeded, may, when fortune is favourable, be sufficient to scare an opponent back to sulk in his dark corner, yet they are not competent to exorcise him—to speak the word of might that strips the veil from his illusory right (Scheinrecht), and reveals it in its utter nothingness —unmasking, as the result of a simple illusion, his opposition to the Good as the Universe.'

We must dig deeper before we reach the real foundations of ethic. Apart from metaphysic, it 'hovers in the air,' and can be prosecuted only to a certain degree. 'A sufficient ground for morality must be neither a barely objective ground, nor a barely subjective ground. Not the former, for the objective can make no claim to bind the subject—not the latter, because the subjective is, to some extent, contingent, and cannot pretend to any objective universal validity. . . . Thus the moral consciousness, resting on two points of support which hover in the air, hovers with them in the air.'

71. We must therefore proceed to examine the process of laying the foundations of morality outside the sphere of individuation. Before doing so, however, I wish to observe that, when we were discussing the second stage of the eudemonistic illusion—happiness in another life—all such excursions into the transcendental world were repudiated with scorn.

72. No fact of consciousness seems to rest more securely on an intuitive basis than the complete isolation of the consciousness of each human being

from that of every other individual of his species. Every one who enters this world may be regarded as a prisoner under sentence of penal servitude, in solitary confinement, for life. The prison is his body; escape is hopeless, for escape is death. The sentence varies enormously in both intensity and duration. One gets his discharge in infancy. He is the best off, inasmuch as the 'quamprimum mori' stands in the next rank to 'non nasci' in order of desirability. Another, 'cui corpus bene constitutum est,' dies suddenly in full vigour of life, and without experiencing the infirmities of old age. He also has a comparatively light sentence. A third, inclosed in a bodily organism, which may be fitly compared to the torture chamber of a Spanish inquisition, lingers on to extreme old age. This man has the benefit of the full rigour of the law. Some moralists have vainly sought to explain this striking inequality by the hypothesis of different degrees of guilt, incurred by the sufferers in a former state of existence, which must be expiated in the present life.

73. So absolute is this isolation, even in the case of persons nearest and dearest to each other, that a philosophic system of absolute Egoism is quite conceivable, as matter of speculation—a system in which the individual is the actual universe; his subjective states exhausting the totality of Being. But, without proceeding to this length, there can be no dispute that every one is phenomenally separated, by an impassable abyss, from his neighbour. The theory,

therefore, that each individual is a substance, completely independent of every other similarly conditioned substance, has, at all events, strong *primâ facie* evidence in its favour.

74. To this, the ordinary view of Individuation, which may be termed Pluralism, may be opposed the system of Abstract Monism. This is the exact opposite of the former. It recognises no reality whatever but that of the one Absolute and Universal substance; denies it altogether to plurality and movement; and thus reduces the entire phenomenal world to bare illusion.

75. If, now, by 'genuine morality' we understand a system of ethical philosophy which involves the two Kantian essentials of absence of Egoism, and presence of Autonomy, we shall find that both Pluralism and Abstract Monism agree in being incompatible with any such system. In Pluralism—even should we regard the substantial individuals as 'the *disjecta membra* of a *ci-devant* god'—the unity of the universe is reduced to an external aggregation of completely independent substances; the absolute sovereignty of the individual—whether we regard his substantiality as metaphysically simple, or as consisting in an aggregation of atoms, is the ultimate deliverance of our practical philosophy. There are, therefore, only *egoistic*, prudential considerations which can impose any restraints on the arbitrary choice of this sovereign being; and the only morality possible must be of the exploded egoistic type (pseudo-morality).

In Abstract Monism, on the other hand, 'all

plurality of individuals is a mere (subjective) illusion. . . . All changes, therefore, taking place in this illusory-show (Schein), such as life and death, action and suffering of individuals, are destitute of all reality and truth, and accordingly matters of perfect indifference.'

76. It is plain, then, that if we are to have any genuine morality, it must be found in some metaphysical system which lies intermediately between these opposite extremes of Pluralism and Abstract Monism. Of these intermediate theories Hartmann discusses two, which he characterises respectively as the true and the false mediation (Vermittelung). The true, being that with which Hegel and Schopenhauer are jointly credited. The false, being the theory of Philosophic Theism.

We may begin with this false theory, and abolish it, once for all, out of our way. No needless preliminary this, to smooth the road by clearing off all removable obstacles. For we are trying to scale the height from which those who fare, with Hartmann, on nectar and ambrosia, look down on the remainder of the universe; and the path is rapidly becoming steeper, and narrower, and more slippery; and is likely to get worse as we climb.

77. In the system of Philosophic Theism, the gulf between the One and the Many is fixed and bridgeless. The Creator is the One, the Creation the Many. The Philosophic Theists have rightly seen that the foundations of the sphere of Plurality must be laid in the sphere of Unity; their blunder is the

ascription of substantiality to the Created, entailing thereby a substantial dualism.

This dualism manifests itself differently in its different subjects. In the creature it leads to a caricaturing imitation (karrikirende Nachäffung) of the Creator, in the conception of the 'derived absoluteness' (abgeleitete Absolutheit) of the created substance. In the Creator it produces an anthropomorphic imitation of the creature, in the conception of the 'Divine Personality.' 'Created Substantiality, derived Absoluteness, and Personality of the Absolute, are the three Concepts of Theism, in which the contradictory synthesis grounded on this point of view, culminates; and which have ever afforded the fairest wrestling-floor of fruitless sophistry.'

78. The historical origin of this theistic metaphysic is easily traced to the desire of supplementing the very rudimentary moral order of this world, by a future state of more righteous and permanent retribution. For this purpose, Immortality and Freedom of the Will are essential conditions. But, immortality involves substantiality, and freedom, absoluteness. The substantiality of the creature, again, involves likeness to the Creator, and hence the notion of the Divine Personality.

Theism is, in short, 'an artificial union of heteronomous and transcendental-egoistic pseudo-morality.' And, as soon as the great truth has been firmly grasped that this union has been contrived simply as an imaginary bait to make us contented with our hard lot—that life is no splendid prize, for which we

should bless and praise our Creator, but a heavy burden, endurable only on moral grounds—then, indeed, the whole theistic theory is exploded for evermore.

79. So, the explosion being over, we pass to 'the true mediation or speculative synthesis of the extremes,' which is to be found in the Hegel-Schopenhauer theory—'in a substantial Monism of Being, which, however, does not exclude (as Abstract Monism did), but includes the inner Plurality of the real (*i.e.* objective-phenomenal) manifestations or objectivations of the Universal-One—in a Monism which seeks Consciousness and Personality only in the sphere of Individuation (not in that of Unity), and contemplates all objectivations of the Absolute as merely DETERMINED and as TRANSITORY, without prejudice to the Freedom and Eternity of the all-one Being who manifests himself in them.'[1]

There is no contradiction in the apparent paradox of placing the Real in the sphere of Individuation; for the Plurality of the manifestation is not regarded, in this system, as an illusory-appearance, only subjectively excited, but as an objectivation of the All-One, antecedent to all subjective perception.

[1] The translation is literal, but as the ground is treacherous, I give the German here: 'Die wahre Vermittelung besteht in einem substantiellen Monismus des Wesens, der aber die innere Vielheit der realen (*d.h.* objectiv-phänomenalen) Manifestationen oder Objectivationen des All-Einen nicht aus-, sondern einschliesst—in einem Monismus, der das Bewusstsein und die Persönlichkeit nur in der Sphäre der Individuation (nicht in derjenigen der Einheit), sucht, und alle Objectivationen des Absoluten als schlechthin determinirt und als vergänglich betrachtet, unbeschadet der Freiheit und Ewigkeit des all-einen Wesens, das in ihnen sich manifestirt.'

80. And now we are in a position to see how from this view of Individuation a 'genuine morality' may emerge. So long as the individual regards himself as essentially and substantially individual, and thus essentially separated from every other individual, he has no motive to trouble himself with anything beyond himself; he must, in other words, be an absolute Egoist. And from unlimited Egoism springs injustice; at least when a strong will is combined with it; and there springs envy, when we contrast the enjoyment, or apparent enjoyment, of others with our own suffering; and there spring malice and delight in mischief, as means for abating this tormenting envy. But, as soon as the individual becomes aware of himself as only a phenomenal objectivation of the One Universal Being, and reaches the conception that—That, in all individuals, which is not mere appearance (Erscheinung), but is the substantial Essence, is one and identically the same in all, he becomes aware that whatever, whether of evil or of good, he does to another, he does it to the Being which is substantially himself.

An act of injustice is a contradiction in terms, inasmuch as it purchases an advance of the weal of the All-one Being in me, by a greater detriment to the weal of the same Being in others. On the other hand, every good deed contributes to the furtherance of the weal of the Universal-One, and thus essentially to that of the Ego.

81. 'My ethical system,' says Schopenhauer, 'is founded on the mystic formula of the Veda and

Vedânta—*tat twam asi*[1]—this thou art—which is applicable to everything that has life, be it man or beast.' And he goes so far as to maintain that, without this principle of the transcendental unity of substance of all individuals, an act of purely disinterested beneficence would be an inexplicable mystery. The following extraordinary passage occurs in the second volume of his 'Parerga':—

'Acts done in conformity with this formula may be regarded as the beginning of Mysticism—*e.g.* an act of beneficence. Every kind act, intentionally done as such, affords an intimation that the doer—in direct contradiction with the phenomenal world, in which the strange individual (the object of the kind act) stands out as wholly sundered from himself—has recognised this real identity. And, therefore, every wholly disinterested act of beneficence is a mysterious action, a mystery; to explain which, it has been found necessary to have recourse to every sort of fiction. After Kant had pulled away every other prop from Theism, he left this—that Theism supplies the best explanation and interpretation of all such mysterious actions. He thus left that system in the position of being, theoretically indemonstrable, but nevertheless to be accepted as useful in practice. But I can hardly believe he was in earnest. For, to prop up morals by the help of Theism, is simply to return to Egoism—though, in truth, the English, and even among ourselves, the very lowest classes of

[1] This mystic formula, which is not in the Veda at all, is equivalent to the Greek τόδε σὺ εἶς.

society, are incapable of conceiving the possibility of any other foundation.'

82. But Schopenhauer himself is absolutely incapable of conceiving a disinterested action, unless this transcendental identity of substantial existence be admitted. For he tells us that 'this recognition of our own true Being in the person of another, comes out with peculiar grace and clearness in the case of individuals who, on the road to inevitable death, bestir themselves energetically for the deliverance of others.' He instances the story of a girl who, bitten at night in a yard by a mad dog, and knowing her own fate was sealed, yet seized the brute and locked it up in a stable, so that the lives of others might not be sacrificed; also the well-known feat of Wilson saving the life of Robertson, related in the 'Heart of Mid-Lothian'; and several similar anecdotes. And then he naïvely asks—How could these, otherwise than by reason of this substantial identity, show in such extreme exertion of their last strength this intense interest in the welfare and continued life of others?

83. Indeed, a carping critic might go so far as to bring a charge of Pseudo-morality against this substantial-identity theory; inasmuch as an action done on account of this identity of being, certainly seems to be of egoistic character. To this gross accusation Hartmann replies as follows:—'Egoism consists essentially in confounding the subjective phenomenal individual with the non-individual essence which underlies it; an attempt, therefore, which seeks the real essence of one's own Personality, outside of the

sphere of Individuality, cannot properly be characterised as Egoistic.' But, this argument will come more naturally under consideration when we have advanced another step into the transcendental world.

84. Another, and still more obvious objection to the *tat twam asi* principle is the handle which it would apparently give to injustice in its worst forms. If I could procure any considerable gratification for myself by imposing the corresponding amount of suffering, either in person or property, on somebody else, I should do the somebody else no harm. He would have no moral ground of complaint against me—for has not he (as substance) been compensated in my joy?

Indeed, we might go further, and say that any act of injustice would become a moral obligation, if we could only secure by it greater happiness for the 'Wesen' in ourselves, than sorrow to be felt by the same 'Wesen' in the injured phenomenal individual. *Tat twam asi* would make an admirable motto for a thief.

85. This, Hartmann assures us, is about the most trivial of all the puerile objections that have been urged against the principle; and arises from the same psychological shortness of view which fails to recognise the existence of evils of the second Rank as defined by Bentham.

Bentham divided all the evils which result from immoral actions into three ranks. The first rank contains the evil accruing to definite, assignable individuals who have been directly injured by the

action. The second contains the evil spread over an indefinite number of individuals, not directly affected by that particular action. The third contains the evil which takes its rise from a long continuance of the evil of the second rank.

For example—take the case of Theft—we have for the first, the loss to the injured individual, his family, and creditors ; for the second, the encouragement to crime, and consequent feeling of insecurity in the neighbourhood ; for the third, the gradual weakening of confidence, credit, and industry throughout the country.

86. It seems to me that this answer, taken from Bentham's evils of the second rank, is really based on Hartmann's own short-sightedness in interpreting his favourite '*tat*.' For, the evils of the second rank have their roots in the first (in den ersten wurzelnd), so that if the first vanish altogether, the second must disappear also.

To take Hartmann's own illustration—Why should not a man at a *table d'hôte* drink up his neighbour's wine? The same Being that enjoys the refreshment in one phenomenal-individual would enjoy it equally in any other. Bentham's principle gives the answer—'If such practices were common, a general sense of insecurity as to their liquor would pervade the company at dinner.' But, on the principle of '*tat*,' we may ask—Why should this feeling of insecurity be a source of annoyance? For, even supposing the presence of one tippling wretch who imbibed all the wine on the table, the 'Wesen' would

enjoy it all the same—unless, indeed, the greedy individual made himself ill, and involved the Wesen in suffering.

So Bentham's principle is no solution of the difficulty. The injured man would give a much more satisfactory reply by simply urging that his phenomenal-consciousness assured him that he has been deprived of his wine, while only Schopenhauer and Hartmann informed him that he has enjoyed it. This 'most trivial of all puerile objections,' therefore, remains as a valid *reductio ad absurdum* of any practical application of the '*tat.*'

87. But, waiving these 'trivial' objections, the inadequacy of the theory of Identity-of-Being, as the foundation of morality, is sufficiently manifest. Eudemonism, in both its forms, egoistic and social, is supposed to have been, long since, more than sufficiently exploded. And yet this Identity theory, ultimately, is but a helpless and imbecile form of Eudemonism. This, though in words denied, is practically admitted by Hartmann. 'If we consider what practical fruit the recognition of the essential identity of individuals is capable of bringing to maturity, we find that this is limited to the extension of the eudemonistic efforts of the Will, from our own peculiar individuality, to the aggregate of individuals, inasmuch as, in this aggregate alone, the Common Being (the real self) may be reached by the operation of individual action.' But we do not find the slightest clue to the solution of the problem—Wherein does the true weal of the Universal Being consist; and, in what way may

it be best promoted by acting on the phenomenal world?

88. Any pessimist, who elects to live, would really be left in a very awkward predicament by this essential-identity theory, if it were to be regarded as the ultimate moral principle. It is not at all easy to see how the weal of the Universal-Unit could be furthered otherwise than by furthering the happiness of the greatest number possible of phenomenal individuals. 'And yet, as each such individual, and, therefore, the aggregate of all such, is doomed to hopeless suffering for life; and, inasmuch as this suffering is reducible to its minimum by aiming at the reduction to bestial condition of the species, which is now on a higher stage of intellectual development, it is plain that this moral principle of essential-identity, though deeper grounded than that of social-eudemonism, does not advance us a single step on our path, and leads to just the same issue in the quietism of despair, and practical nihilism.'

89. All this the Pessimists admit; and, admitting it, they lead us a step higher in our search. The substantial-identity of individuals rests entirely on the substantial-identity of each with the Absolute; and, possibly, in this latter identity, the ultimate moral principle we are in search of is to be found.

As an illustration of their view—we may regard the earth as one most enormous animal, on which every separate sensitive organism is, after its kind and range, an organ of perception. Even the mollusk and jelly-fish—possibly the plant—contribute their

shares of intelligence to the general stock of information possessed by the monster—a small amount, in comparison with that brought in by an advanced æsthetic human being, but still something; and they certainly present the terrestrial phenomena from different points of view.

Now, the substantial-identity of each organism consists in its participation of the one life of the great animal, and this latter may be dependent on the separate organs for its intelligence; still it may be conceived as possessing its own independent Will, quite irrespective of the organisms on the surface of its body.

90. If, now, we look upon the Soul of the Universe as the Deity possessing independent Will, the stage of the problem they have reached is—the mode of ascertaining what that Will may be.

'The history of the interpretation of the revelation of the Divine Will in nature and history, is simply the history of the development of the metaphysical consciousness of humanity, now more than ever involved in a troubled ferment (in trüber Gährung), and, therefore, less than ever adapted to afford the moral consciousness of humanity an indubitable basis and support. In one point only may we recognise a progressive clearing up—that is to say, in the increasing distinctness of our consciousness, that, in any discussion concerning a Divine or Absolute Will, considered as a metaphysical postulate of the moral consciousness, the content (Inhalt) of this Will must be understood to be a logical, intellectual, rational

content—that, moreover, a Will with rational content, or a logical Idea externalising itself in action, can only be depicted as an End (Zweck). Were the Absolute Will non-rational, not even my essential-identity with it would enable me to subordinate my rational will to it, and to make its non-rational aims (Ziele) the aims of my rational will. But, inasmuch as my will is rational, and knows itself as such, it is altogether impossible that the Absolute Will, essentially-identical with it, and of which my will is but a ray, can be non-rational. . . . The external revelation of the Divine Will, thus, being nothing but a manifestation of an absolute Teleology, our question becomes—How are we to recognise those absolute ends for the furtherance of which the human species is specially adapted? And now we have raised ourselves to a platform higher than that of the mere principle of Identity.'

91. But, before the level of the Absolute Moral Principle is reached, yet another step must be taken. We have seen that the moral principle of essential-identity of individuals *inter se* leads directly to quietism and death. And it seems that, unless we are prepared to identify the Absolute with Progression or Evolution, our second principle will lead us no further. 'So long as the Absolute is understood as Being at rest, as abiding substance, the individual can no otherwise deify his individual-life than by seeking to participate in the quiet of the Absolute. It is only when the Absolute itself is comprehended as real movement, that the deification of the individual-

life can be sought in the participation of the absolute movement.'[1]

92. So, now, admitting (1) that the Absolute Being and my Being are one and the same Being, and (2) that the Absolute Being is a Teleological Being, we are in a position to formulate the Absolute Moral Principle.

Hartmann gives it in two forms, which are only two different modes of expressing the same conception. It may be stated as—'The Moral Principle of Absolute Teleology, as the Teleology of our own (no longer of a strange) Being,' or as 'The Moral Principle of the Identity of the individual with the Absolute as the subject of absolute Teleology.'[2]

93. Pausing for a moment for breath on this plane of Absolute Morality, we can see how the culturists may, and do, press the principle, as stated above, into their service. Each individual being both a phenomenon and a substance, and in substance identical with the Absolute—it is clear that his special aim as a phenomenon (*e.g.* pursuit of happiness) must give way to the Absolute aim, which is also his (the individual's) own, when he is considered in the second and higher point of view, as

[1] 'So lange das Absolute als ruhendes Sein, als verharrende Substanz verstanden wird, kann das Individuum sein Individualleben nicht anders vergöttlichen, als indem es an der Ruhe des Absoluten theilzunehmen sucht; erst wenn das Absolute selbst als realer Process gefasst wird, kann auch die Vergöttlichung des Individuallebens in der Theilnahme am absoluten Process gesucht werden.'

[2] 'Das Moralprincip der absoluten Teleologie als derjenigen des eignen (nicht mehr eines fremden) Wesens,' oder als 'das Moralprincip der Identität des Individuums mit dem Absoluten als dem Subject der absoluten Teleologie.'

a substance. So, if we assume culture-development to be the teleological aim of the Absolute, it follows at once that, if any collision should take place between this culture and eudemonism, the latter must retreat from the field.

94. We have now climbed to a considerable height, yet we have not reached the top ; and Hartmann gives a solemn warning to those about to undertake the perilous ascent of the final peak. Should anyone find himself imcompetent, through lack of steadiness of head, to venture higher, he may give up the enterprise without disgrace. Still he must not presume to throw scorn on the loftiest summit, because his own weakness and giddiness have prevented him from scaling it.

But, though steep and dangerous, the path before us is short—a few more steps, if we survive them, will place us on the summit of the moral Mont Blanc. We can then sit down and reflect on all the help we have got, as concerns our quest of a Justification of Life, for the result of all this hard work.

95. However we may strive to stave off the question —What is the Absolute End?—our efforts are fruitless. The problem may, and probably does, lie altogether beyond the range of our faculties, still its solution will be attempted. The desire to find a final cause for everything is too deeply rooted in human nature to give place to any arbitrary warning off a particular territory. What is the use of all this culture-development? will still be asked and answered some way or other. 'Even the materialists,' says Hart-

mann, 'give a quite definite answer to the Why, though, indeed, a negative answer, by a simple negation of all teleology whatever.' But, as sure as any teleology is admitted, men *will* seek a positive answer to the Why.

96. The pessimistic answer is simple but startling. 'The Absolute End of the Universal-Unit is absolute-eudemonistic; the hyper-moral aim, to which all moral means are subservient, is the eudemonia of the Absolute.' (I use the word eudemonia, being a literal translation of Kant's and Hartmann's Græco-German Eudämonie, as being useful for its generality, which includes satisfaction, pleasure, blessedness, happiness, &c.)

An answer sufficient to make all believers in the verbal inspiration of the Kantian ethics stare and gasp! Have we not relapsed into the, long since, irrecoverably outlawed, and hopelessly bankrupt, individual-eudemonia? To those who are familiar with the late Dean Mansel's views as to the essential heterogeneity of the morality of God and that of his intelligent creatures, the apparent inconsistency of the pessimistic answer may not be surprising; there is, indeed, a good deal of resemblance at this point between the ethics of Hartmann and of the Dean.

97. But, be this as it may, Hartmann's reply to the grave charge of egoistic-eudemonism brought against the pessimistic theory of the Ultimate End, is as follows:—We must be careful not to confound Individual eudemonism with absolute eudemonism. It is true that the social eudemonistic principle has

been shown to be an inadequate principle of morality. But its inadequacy does not lie in its being eudemonistic. No one imagines that happiness, as such, is to be rejected, or is morally wrong. It is inadequate because it vainly seeks to discharge the whole function of morality by simply promoting the happiness of phenomenal-individuals of low order. The evolutional moral principle, on the other hand, takes precedence of the eudemonistic, not because it is non-eudemonistic, but because it comprehends the subject of eudemonia in a higher sense than the social-eudemonistic moral principle does. It is, really, a eudemonistic principle of higher order than the other—it defends the right of the absolute subject to eudemonia, against the pretensions of a swarm of phenomenal subjects.

98. But is not this, egoistic-eudemonism again? Absolute eudemonism for the absolute individual (das absolute Individuum) certainly *is* egoistic-eudemonism. Still to offer this as an objection to the above explanation of the Absolute End, is to overlook the truth that, only within the sphere of individuation, has the concept of morality any signification. We have seen that all morality is relative to the stage of individuality of the acting subject, and its relation to individuals of higher or lower order. Regarding, then, the Universal-Unit as the absolute individual, above whom no higher platform can be found, it follows that the individual end of this absolute individual must be sought in the highest possible furtherance of his own all-comprehending felicity.

99. In short, we have got into a hyper-moral field. If man was absolute there would be no morality, and his individual eudemonia would be his only rational end. But he is not absolute, and, therefore, in his case the end and eudemonia are not coincident. There are two reasons for this discrepancy. First, we are individuals of inferior order in the scale of individuation, and, consequently, our individual eudemonistic ends must give place to those of the higher orders. And, secondly, as we see the individual ends of higher and the highest orders only from their external, teleological, but not from their internal, eudemonistic side, we are easily led to overlook the latter altogether.

100. It seems, then, that our Absolute Moral Principle (section 92) may be more simply stated as 'The absolute-eudemonistic moral principle.' The *ultimate* aim of culture-development is the promotion of the eudemonia of the Absolute Being. There may be several intermediate aims to be passed through, but this eudemonia is the grand *finale*.

Now, we have seen that development of culture is development of sorrow; it is therefore quite clear, seeing that the Absolute participates in all of this sorrow, that the promotion of his eudemonia cannot be *directly* effected by promotion of culture. Some mysterious change must be indirectly, or secondarily, wrought by it in his condition, and a change of such immense importance, as to more than balance all the fearful aggregate of suffering which inevitably results from his union with the painful universe.

101. What this mysterious change may be is veiled in impenetrable mist. But one tremendous consequence is unavoidable, and that is—*The transcendental misery of the Absolute.* Prior to, and aloof from, this evolutional progress, the Deity must have been not blessed but unblessed (nicht selig, sondern unselig). 'Only conceive the existence of the Absolute Being, if blessed in himself, yet discontented with his blessedness, and setting heaven and earth in motion, in order to increase his own blessedness by a small amount, through the misery of countless creatures. The conception of such a being is revolting to our moral consciousness; instead of patiently submitting to his will, we regard him with loathing and abhorrence. Submission is a crime; rebellion a moral duty.'

102. But, postulating the negative condition of the Transcendental Being as to eudemonia, *i.e.* his immanent misery—the whole position is changed at once. Our long climb is over; we have reached the topmost pinnacle of the dangerous peak, and, gasping in the thin air which no mere bacon and cabbage eater can hope to breathe, we look down on the universe, and turn dizzy at the sight.

For, what lies below us? An enormous poultice—a painful blister, applied by the Universal Being to himself, to draw out the torture which is consuming him within.[1]

[1] Ein schmerzhaftes Zugpflaster, welches das all-eine Wesen sich selbst applicirt, um einen inneren Schmerz zunächst nach aussen abzulenken und für die Folge zu beseitigen.

103. This poultice is the universe. Here we have the full and perfect explanation of the creation groaning and travailing in pain. It is all the frantic effort of the Creator to deliver himself from intolerable agony. No wonder we were warned against rashly persisting in our climb. No wonder a long training on nectar and ambrosia was prescribed, as the indispensable condition to enable us to face the Ultimatum of Pessimism and live.

104. So, love to God is replaced by sympathy with God. And now we can formulate the Ultimate End. It is 'The deliverance of the Absolute from his transcendental misery, by means of the immanent torment of the world-evolution.'

To accelerate this deliverance, as much as in him lies, is the bounden duty of each phenomenal-individual. 'The moral consciousness must despise as an ignoble being a god who, in order to become still more blessed, torments himself in the form of countless creatures, and will refuse compliance with his ignoble aim. But, with a God who is constrained to take upon himself the severest sufferings in order, if possible, to alleviate or shorten still sharper pangs, every human heart must beat in sympathy, even if he failed to recognise the fact that he himself is the Being who endures it all.'

105. And thus, at last, we have found what we have sought so long, the Pessimistic Justification of Life. The answer to the question, To be or not to be? is as follows :—It is our duty to remain in life ourselves, and to continue the human species, in

order, by our suffering, to alleviate the Divine (which is also our own) misery. In some mysterious manner evolution of all kinds, whether cosmical, organic, or intellectual, has a tendency in this direction. Evolution, therefore, at all cost of misery to individuals and to the whole race, must be promoted; and the only evolution of which the human species is capable, must take the form of culture-development. Therefore develop culture, and endure your sorrow.

106. This is the Ultimatum of Pessimism. The grotesque absurdity of what we may call the Blister, or Poultice Theory of the Universe is such, that some apology would seem to be due to the reader for having led him up the successive steps to the crowning summit from which this astounding prospect may be viewed and shuddered at. But this would be to overlook the significance of the position, in respect of both ethical science and Christian theology, which Pessimism now occupies. The system can no longer be contemptuously set on one side, as a mere whim of a very able but eccentric, and not particularly amiable man, who, soured by failure of literary success, found a morbid gratification in publishing his gloomy views of human life. It appeals to facts—facts are stubborn; and nothing can be more childish than to reject a theory which appeals to facts, simply because it is in itself disagreeable, and leads to consequences which are even more so. To enter into a detailed examination of these facts on which scientific pessimism is based, would be obviously impossible in a short ethical study like the present. The

English reader may find a good summary, not only of these, but also of the counter-facts which may be pressed into service on the optimistic side, in Mr. Sully's able work on the subject.

107. If we strip from the Christian system the doctrine of a future life, the residuum is plainly pessimistic. 'In the world ye shall have tribulation,' is the explicit deliverance of the Founder. Thus, if 'the world' is all that is left to us, tribulation remains as the final outcome of human existence. Now, it cannot be disputed that the tendency of contemporary philosophy is to throw this doctrine overboard; and a very large school, calling themselves Positivists or Humanitarians, conceive that its place may be supplied by the theory of social-eudemonism considered above. It seems to me that, in their destructive polemic against this very theory, the pessimists have done good service. They have placed in clear light the essential antagonism between eudemonism and evolution—in short, they maintain that the position of a being, whose capacities have already outgrown his position (environment), cannot be improved by still further development of the former.

108. If this be so, the barrier between positivism and pessimism is of the very flimsiest description. The positivist, if consistent, should repudiate all culture, and aim at restoring the primeval barbarism of mankind. And, as a fact, by relegating happiness into the distant future, he certainly *is* a pessimist-of-the-present. The greatest English representative of the school says expressly, 'Unquestionably it is

possible to do without happiness; it is done involuntarily by nineteen-twentieths of mankind, even in those parts of our present world which are least deep in barbarism.' So John Stuart Mill was a present-pessimist. Moreover, in the absolute *indifference* which most positivists profess to the question of a future life—in this repudiation of desire for the only form of existence which we can know anything about, *i.e.* our own conscious personal existence—we may see as close an approach to the 'denial of the Will to live,' the *summum bonum* of the school of Schopenhauer, as is likely to be reached in this world.

109. These considerations are quite sufficient as an excuse for a careful examination of scientific pessimism. I think that most readers will admit that the Blister theory is insufficient as a justification of life. The blister must not be allowed to wear itself out, and must be constantly renewed by fresh material, to draw out the pain of the Universal-Unit substance—which, being interpreted, means that conscious misery, about which there can be no dispute, is to be voluntarily endured, for the imaginary benefit of an hypothetical and unconscious subject—real sorrow to be set against imaginary alleviation of unconscious pain!

Surely the miserable God is a *deus ex machina*, who affords to the pessimist a pretext for transmitting life to his descendants, which he would be sure to have done, in accordance with the instinctive laws of human nature; exactly as the supra-lapsarian Calvinist does, though he believes that most of his

children are fore-doomed to everlasting life in torture. The intervention of the *deus* was inevitable, for the question could not be evaded—and, so far as the interests of pessimism depend upon the theory of it being secured from open scorn, so far its very being in the world depends upon its appearing to have no contrariety to continuance of life, and reproduction of the species.

110. The very notion of unconscious pain involves a grave psychological difficulty. That there are obscure, or latent modifications of mind, which do not rise over the threshold of consciousness, is not disputed. But in what sense can we apply the terms pleasure or pain to any of these? Do we attach any meaning to the words, except as modes of consciousness? I know I do not, and certainly do not care in the least for unconscious pleasure or pain.

We may even venture so far as to doubt their weight, if the experience were immediately followed by a draught of the cup of Lethe For example:—Suppose a man has to undergo three formidable surgical operations. The first is performed without the use of anæsthetics, and he suffers the whole of the sharp pain. Before the second, ether is administered; and, during the operation, the patient exhibits all the external signs of acute physical suffering, but on being restored to consciousness, has not the slightest memory of any, and believes himself to have been perfectly free from it. Next, let us suppose it to have been clearly made out, and ascertained as an indubitable fact, that the ether only paralysed the

memory, and that the patient really suffered on the second precisely as on the former occasion. Now, before the third operation, ask the patient, with the experiences of the first and second fresh in his mind, whether he chooses to have the anæsthetic administered or not. He knows that he will suffer alike in either case; but he takes the ether, and cares nothing about the unremembered agony.

111. Or, again :—The Cartesians hold that the mental substance is thought. Cessation of thought, therefore, is cessation of the substance, *i.e.* annihilation. Hence, perfectly dreamless sleep is inconsistent with life; and, no matter how soundly anyone has slept, he must have dreamed incessantly, though he may have totally forgotten his dreams. Possibly this theory may be true. But, does anyone care in the least whether such forgotten dreams were of the horrible or the delightful type; or for the chance of the repetition of either the one or the other on the following night?

112. Had the pessimistic argument been based on the assumption of *unconscious deficiency*, instead of unconscious suffering, no objection on the ground that the assumption was undue, could be raised from the side of psychology. Most likely, all finite intelligent beings actually are in this state of unconscious deficiency; indeed, the possibility of serious alteration, for the worse, in the eudemonistic balance, by a rise into consciousness of this hitherto unconscious imperfection, renders the whole question well worthy of our attention.

113. This possibility of disturbance is easily illustrated by the case of persons who have been born without one or more of the (as ordinarily reckoned) five senses. For example:—Suppose a man totally blind from his birth. He is in the dark, but the darkness is for him unconscious darkness. Though some psychologists strangely ascribe to him a presentative knowledge of blackness, he has really no more conception of black than he has of white; and has just as good reason for holding the former to resemble the sound of a trumpet, as our old Lockian friend had for persuading himself that scarlet was like that terrible noise. He knows that other men possess a power which he has not—a power by which they mysteriously become aware of the existence of bodies, though silent and inodorous, at considerable distances from themselves. But, of the nature of that power, and of the vast importance of the sense which his unhappy fate has denied to him, he has not the most rudimentary idea.

114. If, now, we suppose the power of sight to be given to this blind man—say, for a week, or at all events for a period sufficient for him to learn its use—and then to be taken away. Can we say he is restored to his former position? In one way he certainly *is* restored to it; for he is put back into precisely the same darkness he was in before. But there is this terrible difference. *Now*, he knows what darkness is; before he knew it not. He has eaten one of the fruits of the tree of knowledge, and the result has been sorrow.

115. Reasoning from analogy, we may advance a step further and assume the possibility—though to conceive its nature we are incapable—of a sixth sense. We may imagine ourselves furnished with a new organ of sensation, as different from any of our present organs as the eye is from the ear, and conveying to us new intelligence from the external world, of as great intrinsic importance as either light or sound. No one could conjecture the different aspect which the universe would at once assume. 'The astronomy of the blind,' says Dr. Thomas Brown, 'if the word might still be used to express a science so very different from the present, would, in truth, be a sort of chemistry. Day and night, the magnificent and harmonious revolution of season after season would be nothing more than periodical changes of temperature in the objects around; and that great dispenser of the seasons, the source of light and beauty, and almost of animation, if its separate existence could be at all inferred, would probably be classed as something similar, though inferior in power, to that unknown source of heat, which, by a perilous and almost unknown process, was fearfully piled and kindled on the household hearth.'

116. So, just as the acquisition of the sense of sight would have revolutionised the astronomy of Brown's blind men, the new sixth sense—still adhering to the orthodox but absurd classification—would revolutionise, more or less, every one of our physical sciences, perhaps, too, our moral philosophy, to such

an extent that the old sciences would be as much in the background, with respect to the new, as the chemical astronomy in comparison with the astronomy of the telescope and spectroscope.

And it is plain that every human being is, in respect of the imagined sense, almost exactly in the position in which the man born blind is placed with respect to light—*i.e.* he is in a state of unconscious deficiency. The only difference is, that the blind man *knows* that other men have a power of which he is destitute; so the power is actual, whereas the sixth sense is only hypothetical. I do not think that this difference will weigh much with any who admit that there may be a good deal between heaven and earth not yet dreamed of, much less explained, in our philosophy.

117. Such being the state of the case, let us next imagine this unknown power of perception to be conferred on any given individual; that he is allowed to exercise it sufficiently to enable him to understand its use, and appreciate its advantages; and then that he is irrecoverably deprived of it.

As, in the instance of the blind man sent back into his former darkness, he is, in one sense, restored to his former position; he is even placed in the same position as all his fellow-men around him. Yet he is not in the same position, for his short experience may have been enough to render all his remaining life an intolerable burden, worse than what any pessimist has been able to conceive.

Such considerations are not without weight in the

pessimistic argument concerning the antagonism between evolution and eudemonism. Development of culture may, in like manner, have the effect of bringing out strongly, in lurid light, defects of an insuperable and painful character in our human constitution and position, which would otherwise have remained happily unknown—

> To know the change and feel it,
> When there is none to heal it,
> Nor numbed sense to steal it—
> Was never said in rhyme.

118. But, neglecting these minor considerations, the point, in the pessimistic justification of life, that seems to be most worthy of special notice is this —that this justification is arrived at only as the result of a long excursion through the thick darkness of the transcendental world. Step by step we have followed them up to their ultimatum of the immanent misery of the Supreme Being, and the consequent deduction of the moral obligation of each human being to co-operate in the alleviation of his pain. And the possibility of such alleviation is based again on a transcendental hypothesis—viz. that furtherance of culture tends to produce this effect. So that any incipient pessimist, who doubts the competence of either his own chiefs, or of any others, as guides through the territory that lies behind the veil of Isis, is actually left without any rational protection from suicide. If the pessimistic arguments are really sound and valid—if it be the fact that conscious life and misery are inseparable, and, by the very nature

of things, must ever so remain—the man is a fool if he continues in it a moment longer than he need, and a scoundrel if he becomes the means of bringing any more wretches into existence.

119. And, possibly, this may be the correct way of looking at the whole question. That a conclusion is disagreeable is no proof that it is groundless. We may wish very much that life were happy, and a blessing to its possessors, and yet it may be miserable, and its possession a curse, all the same.

But, before destroying ourselves, it will be well, as a last chance, to take a look at the second stage of the eudemonistic illusion, which, it will be recollected, was contemptuously shoved on one side on the ground that a future life is supposed to rest on transcendental considerations—*i.e.* has exactly the same *kind* of basis, though not altogether of so extravagant a description, as the pessimist's own justification of life. With the Blister theory of the Universe before our eyes, this course can hardly be considered unreasonable.

120. And, in the first place, it may be premised that the bare admission of the possibility of a future life, would at once destroy the antagonism which has been exhibited as existing between culture and happiness. This antagonism we saw to depend on the augmentation, by cultural-development, of desires which could never obtain any adequate satisfaction if our existence were limited to the short span of the present life. But, with the unknown possibilities of another world before us, and with the removal of temporal limitations, what would have

been sources of wretchedness are changed into fountains of joy. The philanthropist need no longer set up Relapse-into-primitive-bestial-condition as the goal of his endeavours for the benefit of mankind.

121. So, even in the interests of culture, it will be well to consider whether the pessimists have been successful in manifesting the impossibility of a future life. Let us take the system of materialism, as obviously that which apparently involves annihilation of conscious life by resolution of the bodily organism into its elements. I am not considering the case of the religious materialists (such as Hartley), for they base the future life on a directly supernatural reconstruction of the body; I am confining myself entirely to material philosophy.

All our consciousness, memory included, being, by hypothesis, a function of the aggregation and motion of a system of atoms, called a brain, it is plain that whenever this aggregate and motion is destroyed (Death), all consciousness and life must depart along with them. The question is—Will they not return?

122. In seeking an answer we must not forget the immensity of space, the immensity of time, and the innumerability of atoms. As Velleius says—'In hac immensitate latitudinum, longitudinum, altitudinum, infinita vis innumerabilium volitat atomorum, quae, interjecto inani, cohaerescunt tamen inter se, et aliae alias apprehendentes continuantur; ex quo efficiuntur hae rerum formae et figurae, quas vos effici posse sine follibus et incudibus non putatis.' Velleius is here controverting the cosmogony of the Stoics, but

we may use his argument as a proof, on materialistic principles, of a future state of existence.

For, to determine the precise epoch at which, among the 'infinita vis atomorum,' that particular aggregation and motion which constitutes any given individual's present consciousness will occur again, is a mathematical problem in permutations and combinations. A sufficiently difficult and complicated problem, but one which a mathematician of tremendous power, and acquainted with the laws of the motion of the atoms, could solve, and thus fix the date of the restoration of the brain. And with the new brain the old consciousness, including remembrance of the former life, returns; but, inasmuch as, by all laws of probability, the environment is different, the new life will enter upon a new track, and will continue along it till some unknown force may destroy it again, but destroy it only for a time.

What is this but a future life? Bacon said of this very school that it 'doth most demonstrate religion.' We may add that it doth mathematically demonstrate another life.

So much by way of *argumentum ad hominem* against the denial of a future life on the grounds of materialism. If, now, the transcendental world can survive the shock of materialism, it is not likely to succumb before a more spiritual theory of the mind.

123. I have already had occasion (Sect. 9) to make some remarks on the relativity of our notions of time and space, in respect of magnitude. A few further considerations on the same subject may give

some help towards warding off another suicidal theory concerning the administration of the universe.

There are, says John Locke, sundry words of time 'that ordinarily are thought to stand for positive ideas, which yet will, when considered, be found to be relative, such as are *young*, *old*, &c.' Under the &c. he includes such words as *long*, and *short*, understood as periods of time. And certainly his remarks are obvious enough in reference to the examples he gives by way of illustration. A horse 'we call old,' when of equal age with the man who is 'young'—a dog is 'old' when he has reached the years of what Locke most justly calls a 'very young man,' viz., a child of seven years.

124. But, many people have a notion that, besides this relativity of long and short, big and little, such terms possess, in addition, an absolute significance, *e.g.* they hold that a second is a short period of time, and that a century is a long period. Only with considerable difficulty could they be induced to admit that each bears the same ratio to the infinitude of duration; and it is likely that the proposition that the earth and a grain of snipe-shot have the same proportion to the infinitude of expansion, would be received rather as a laughable paradox than a mathematical identity.

125. We may extend our limits, in each direction, immensely farther than the second and the century, for time, and the grain of shot and the earth, for space. Physical science has, of late years, brought under our notice spatial magnitudes and temporal

periods of such vastness and of such minuteness that the human faculties absolutely fail to conceive them. The vibration in the ether which forms the element of our sensation of violet light occupies a period of time, which, expressed in terms of one second, requires fifteen figures in the denominator of the fraction—inasmuch as 699,000,000,000,000 of them take place in that 'short' interval. For immensity of time, we can only speak vaguely of geological periods; or even of such as that measured by the bird, which flying once in a million years to a heap of fine sand as big as the earth, removed on each visit a single particle. (As well as I recollect, this legend was invented as a feeble illustration of the enormous burnings designed for most of us by our Heavenly Father.)

Between such a period and that of the violet oscillation the gulf seems sufficiently wide; and yet the disciple of Kant will find no difficulty in admitting the possibility that one intellectual being might be so framed as to regard the violet vibration as inconceivably 'long;' while another might fail to appreciate the geological, or even the Bird period, by reason of its being so exceedingly 'short.'

126. And, similarly with respect to Space. No chemist can realise in imagination the linear distances which separate the atoms of a molecule. No astronomer can venture to compute the size and distance of those lonely lights which still remain just breaking over the edge of the field of vision.

So the whole stellar universe, as far as the most

powerful telescope has yet penetrated, may be the chemical molecules of something—awful to contemplate—lying beyond. The new chemistry seems to point to some analogy existing between that universe and the elementary constitution of matter. Professor Balfour Stewart considers that 'perhaps we shall not greatly err if we regard a molecule as representing on a small scale something analogous to the solar system, while the various atoms which constitute the molecule may be likened to the various bodies of the solar system.'

127. So the molecule may be, on its planets, the atoms, the seat of life and intelligence; if so, to these microcosmical beings any individual man may stand in the position which the tremendous Dweller of the Sidereal Universe holds with regard to the human race.

'Risum teneatis, amici?' If you do not, take care lest perchance you are blundering on the absolute bigness and smallness of objects in space. Lilliput and Brobdingnag are put out of countenance; even the organic structure of the solar willow-leaves is a mere nothing; but, notwithstanding all this, a physicist, even if armed with telescopic and microscopic power a million-fold greater than the highest now available, would be a presumptuous man if he took upon himself to give a dogmatic denial to such an hypothesis!

128. But what have these wild speculations to do with our justification of life? This much—they have the advantage of showing in strong light the

unphilosophical nature of a theory of the universe, which really amounts to a justification of suicide. Some philosophical moralists, whose main principle seems to be the obliteration of the individual in the interest of the community, extend their theory to the Supreme Governor of the Universe (if such there be), maintaining that he, though careful of the type, is careless of the single life. May we not find a trace of this disheartening theory in Butler's 'system, or scheme which is governed by general laws?'

129. That such a theory, regarding the Almighty as competent to deal with masses, but unable to descend to particulars, is based on the analogy of our own terrestrial governments, and, simply, an anthropopathic extension of our own incapacity to our conception of the Supreme Being, seems to be plain enough. A human being, even of the highest order of intelligence known to the species, is soon overwhelmed by a multiplicity of transactions; so, the wider the sphere of his activity, the more completely must he turn over to subordinates the management of each particular detail. There is no surer sign of incapacity for rule in a sovereign than a propensity —such as was conspicuously exemplified in Philip II. of Spain—to interfere perpetually in small matters.

130. But, if worlds be piled on worlds, as is assumed in the physical system above described, the theory collapses at once. The position of one individual human being, and that of the whole human species, with respect to the systems which lie respectively above and below the sphere of our

cognitions, are perfectly alike. Just as in mathematics, dx^2 and Adx^2 (A being finite) are alike insignificant in comparison with dx, so the individual man and 1,000,000,000 men are equally small in comparison with the greater, equally large in comparison with the less. No longer a weak isthmus between two immensities, he, in one point of view, is himself immensity. And it is quite possible that to represent the Supreme Ruler as wholly and absolutely engrossed with the care of this one individual man, would be no more widely remote from the truth, than it is to regard him as absorbed in superintending the nation, but careless or incompetent to manage the affairs of the separate individuals of whom the nation is composed.

131. Furthermore, these same wild speculations may suggest another reason for not hastily abandoning the position to which we have fallen back—the second stage of the eudemonistic 'illusion.' They bring out with great clearness the Ultimatum of the Physics of the present. The astounding fact that oscillation, backwards and forwards, is our last analysis of everything. Heat, light, sound, electricity, sensation, thought, emotion—all are reduced to the swinging of infinitesimal atoms.

And, if this be the ultimatum, then surely behind this whizzing world, which neither eye hath seen nor ear heard, Something lies hid that hath not entered into the heart of man to conceive. We may vary in every conceivable mode the vibrations, assigning every possible speed, amplitude, orbital curve, to the

restless particles. But, when we come to translate the motions into modes of consciousness, their inadequacy as explanations is too salient to be missed. The explanation is grotesque; and we are at once led on to the belief in Something beyond; Something which has not been reached, and cannot be conceived.

132. Between us and this Something—awful in mystery and in power—stands an impassable barrier, called by some the Veil of Isis. Isis herself tells us that she is all that has been, is, and shall be, and that no mortal has taken off her veil. So, what she really is none can tell. Such deadly horror may be written on her face that no mortal man could look at her and live. Or, she may be of such transcendent loveliness that one glimpse of her immortal beauty would make all earthly pleasures pall on us for evermore, and turn to ashes as the fabled fruits of the Dead Sea.

133. The barrier is impassable. Yet, from the first dawn of reflection, men have never ceased to fight vigorously to get through it; they never will cease to fight; and it would be evil for humanity if they gave up the battle in despair. Not only do they fight, but they often persuade themselves, by conjuring with words, that they have succeeded in getting through; and, what is stranger still, men can be found in abundance who will believe them. One man, for instance, in whom the word 'supernatural' excites all the evil passions of human nature, lets the synonym 'hyperphysical' pass without a murmur. Another imagines that the substitution of

'neural tremor' for 'nerve vibration' throws a flood of light on mental physiology. But, if we look at our whole contemporary philosophy it will not be easy to point out one single step of positive advance which has been made since the days of Plato; much has been done in the way of explosion, but any attempt at reconstruction is the trumpet signal for battle. The sciences of observation and experiment progress; but real philosophy, apart from verbal, is as fixed as the Veil itself.

134. There is, certainly, a copious philosophical literature—'Mirabile videtur, quod non rideat haruspex, quum haruspicem viderit: hoc mirabilius, quod vos inter vos risum tenere possitis;' weed out of it all the polemical and controversial elements—How much remains; and, of the small residuum, how great the value? What one 'philosopher' 'discovers,' the next tells us was 'discovered' long ago, and is untrue. The 'discoveries of Kant' are a series of assertions, for which that greatest of German philosophers assigned certain reasons. These reasons are acquiesced in, and called 'proofs' by his disciples; but are energetically controverted, 'refuted,' and the results repudiated, by as large a school of antagonistic philosophers.

135. The papers set at our Universities for examinations in philosophy are significant enough of the state of ontological science. They are all pugnacious—'What does Mr. A. maintain on such a point?' 'With what error does Mr. B. here charge Mr. A.?' 'How does Mr. C. show that both Mr. A.

and Mr. B. have completely misapprehended the state of the case?' 'What is the correct answer to the original question?' This last, being interpreted, means—What are the views of Mr. D. (the examiner) on the subject? said views in the judgment of Mr. E. not only being quite wrong, but also involving sad moral turpitude on Mr. D.'s part. Messrs. A. B. C. D. and E. are all of them able men, they have deeply studied the subject in question, and all of them are at loggerheads. Can we be far astray in assuming that a so-called science which leads to such results is beyond the range of the human capacity?

136. Thus the world behind the Veil of Isis—we may call it transcendental, intelligible, ontological, hyperphysical, supernatural, as we please—is wholly unknown. To lift the veil is Death. And in this unknown field there may be room for another life, sufficient to justify our continuance in the present, despite its load of sorrow. This is no proof of such a hyperphysical state; but, to meet the argument by which the pessimists seek to make out the illusory character of the quest of happiness on the second stage, only possibility of such life is wanted, and this possibility we have got. We may remain in life as individuals, we may continue the species, we may develop culture—all, in the hope, not to be destroyed by physical analogies, that something better than to 'be blown about the desert dust, or sealed within the iron hills,' may be in store for us hereafter.

137. But it should never be forgotten that, the strength of our position here lying in our ignorance

of the transcendental world, too much caution cannot be used if 'analogical reasoning' must be pressed into service for controversial purposes. And this has been done to a decidedly mischievous extent. Even such a book as Butler's 'Analogy,' which, certainly, did good service in its day, in the present state of theological controversy is a clumsy and dangerous weapon. For instance—In what has been called the Police-magistrate theory of the Divine Government, we have to assume that the suffering which follows the violation of a Law of Nature, must be viewed in the light of a 'punishment' annexed by the Author of Nature to such violation. This obviously leads to a grave imputation on both his justice and goodness, inasmuch as, very frequently, it is only through suffering the penalty, we come to suspect the existence of the Law. No one will maintain that to inflict punishment for unavoidable ignorance is the part of a good and wise governor.

138. Here we may with advantage extend one of Bacon's aphorisms ('Novum Organum,' Book I.), which, though referring to physical discoveries, is capable of a higher application. He is trying to make out that there is good hope for the progress of the sciences, inasmuch as there may be many things yet undiscovered in Nature: 'quae nullam cum jam inventis cognationem habent aut parallelismum; sed omnino sita sunt extra vias phantasiae.'

'Etiam illud ad spem trahi possit, quod nonnulla ex his, quae jam inventa sunt, ejus sint generis, ut, antequam invenirentur, haud facile cuiquam in mentem

venisset de iis aliquid suspicari: sed plane quis illa ut impossibilia contempsisset. Solent enim homines de rebus novis, ad exemplum veterum, et secundum phantasiam ex iis praeceptam et inquinatam, hariolari; quod genus opinandi fallacissimum est, quandoquidem multa ex his, quae ex fontibus rerum petuntur, per rivulos consuetos non fluant.'

'For instance, if, before the invention of cannon, one had described the engine by its effects, as follows: "There is a new invention by means of which walls, and the greatest fortifications can be shaken and overthrown from a great distance," men would have set about considering all sorts of ways of increasing the force of projectiles, by using weights and wheels, and similar devices; but it is not likely that anyone would have thought of a sudden and violently expanding fiery blast.

'And, just in the same way, if, before the discovery of silk thread, anyone had discoursed thus—"A sort of thread has been discovered, well adapted for clothes and furniture, far surpassing in fineness, tenacity, brilliancy, and softness, any thread of either flax or wool"—men would have set to work thinking of Chinese plants, or the finer hair of certain animals, or the plumage and down of birds; but they never would have had the idea of its being spun, and that in abundance, and annually, by a small worm. If anyone had said a word about a worm, he would have been laughed at, as if he were dreaming of some new manufacture from spiders.

'And so, if before the discovery of the mariner's

compass, we had been told that an instrument had been invented, by means of which the cardinal points of the heavens could be taken and distinguished—men would have entered upon discussions on the improvement of astronomical instruments of all sorts, but would never have conjectured a simple mineral or metallic substance, not a celestial body, and which yet conformed to the motions of the celestial bodies.'

139. So far Bacon. May we not extend his reasoning? 'If, before the way through the Veil of Isis had been discovered, anyone had discoursed thus—"there is another and a better life after death for the inhabitants of this world"—immediately men would have set about thinking of other planets, moving round the sun or other stars, on which those departed from the earth dwell under more favourable conditions of life—the planet bringing forth abundantly the means of subsistence, under the influence of natural laws less harshly and ruthlessly administered than what we experience here. But it would never have entered into anyone's heart to conceive. . . .'

Here stands the Veil, and we can proceed no farther. But surely there is nothing unreasonable in supposing that the future life may be as completely heterogeneous with our preconceived expectations, as gunpowder, silk thread, and the mariner's compass turned out to be.

140. The wonderful elastic jelly, called ether, which is supposed to fill all space, and which, if existing, is certainly hyperphysical, may perhaps be the bridge of communication between the two worlds,

or, as the authors of 'the Unseen Universe' seem to imagine, may even constitute the spiritual world itself. Such hypotheses, however, are always exposed to the contingency of being manifested as false, in the course of scientific progress. It is better, therefore, to admit at once the possibility of such essential heterogeneity between the future life and the present, that the former could not be conceived by us unless we were endowed with new and higher mental capacities.

141. The question of a future life being here discussed solely in reference to its existence as a possible justification of life on earth, and, without any special reference to rewards or punishments therein, I am not, strictly speaking, called on to reply to objections which have been raised, on the score of Egoism, to this doctrine. Still, as the present is an Ethical study, I do not wish to end without saying a word on the subject.

142. If we take the discourses recorded in the synoptical gospels as substantially the teaching of the Founder of Christianity, there can be no question that he, habitually, enforced his moral lessons by appeals to the hopes and fears of his disciples. Even the cup of cold water given in the name of a disciple should be a ground for reward.

Regard to our own chief interest is a lawful and, notwithstanding all Kantians, moral principle of action; but it would be idle to deny that, in a system of practical ethics, it occupies no very elevated position. If we do a good action, and, at the same time,

hope to be rewarded for it, we do what is right; but the man who did the same act without any anticipation of ulterior results, stands on a higher moral plane. In the Anglican Liturgy the prayer that 'we, plenteously bringing forth the fruit of good works, may by God be plenteously rewarded,' cannot be found fault with. But the moral attitude of the suppliant is far lower than that which he assumes wh en he prays that 'the thoughts of his heart may be cleansed, so that he may perfectly love God, and worthily magnify His holy name'—resting in that exaltation of love, and stipulating for no further reward.

So the Positivist may admit the value of the Christian ethics, as far as they go; and yet, in his absolute repudiation of the notion of recompense, may show us a more excellent way.

143. And so he does, on all principles of Atheism. But the difficulty vanishes with the admission of a Divine Ruler. For, although we may estimate very highly the nobility of the labourers who give their hard work for nothing, the fact that they had to do so, is in no way consistent with the ability and goodness of the employer. So far from it, we know that liberality of payment, on the one hand, and niggardliness or neglect on the other, are essential elements in discriminating between the good and the bad master. Now, whatever views we adopt as to the nature of Jesus, it is plain that He regarded Himself as the Son of God, charged with a special mission on earth, and that an essential part of that mission was

the vindication of the ways of His Father to men. The inculcation of a doctrine of reward and punishment was therefore indispensable.

144. I have now reached the end of my long paper and journey—of which the results as to the eudemonistic balance, and consequent justification or *reductio ad absurdum* of life, may be shortly stated as follows:—

1. For the case of the lower animals we have no sufficient data to enable us to decide the nature of the eudemonistic balance.

2. Nor for the case of mankind in the lowest grade of civilisation.

3. Postulating the negation of a future life, advancing civilization rapidly brings mankind into the position of a race whose capacities have outgrown their environment.

4. Development of culture is, therefore, development of discontent.

5. And discontent is unhappiness.

6. Hence, between the culturists and the social-eudemonists there exists an essential, though, for the most part, unconscious antagonism.

7. The social-eudemonists, if consistent, should aim at 'Wiederverthierung.'

8. Or, if this be regarded as worse than death, at Suicide.

9. And, beyond all question, they should cease to propagate the species.

10. The pessimists meet this difficulty by making an excursion into the Transcendental world.

11. A privilege which they refuse to those who argue for a future life.

12. Their theory involves two gratuitous assumptions:—1st. That the Supreme Being is intensely miserable; 2nd. That cultural-development alleviates his misery.

13. And culminates in the Blister Theory of the Universe.

14. Which justifies our remaining in sorrowful life, out of compassion for the sufferings of God.

15. But the hypothesis of a future life justifies our remaining in the present, without the help of any such absurdities.

16. And justifies development of culture.

17. And is not overturned even by Materialism.

18. And is in no way assailable on ethical grounds.

19. But lies in a hyperphysical sphere.

20. And is, therefore, imperilled by 'Reasoning from Analogy.'

145. And the final conclusion is this—If the pessimists are to be fought successfully, the battle must take place on what they call the second stage of the eudemonistic Illusion; for, if we allow ourselves to be beaten back to the third stage, they will quickly thrust us over the edge—and great will be the fall.

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